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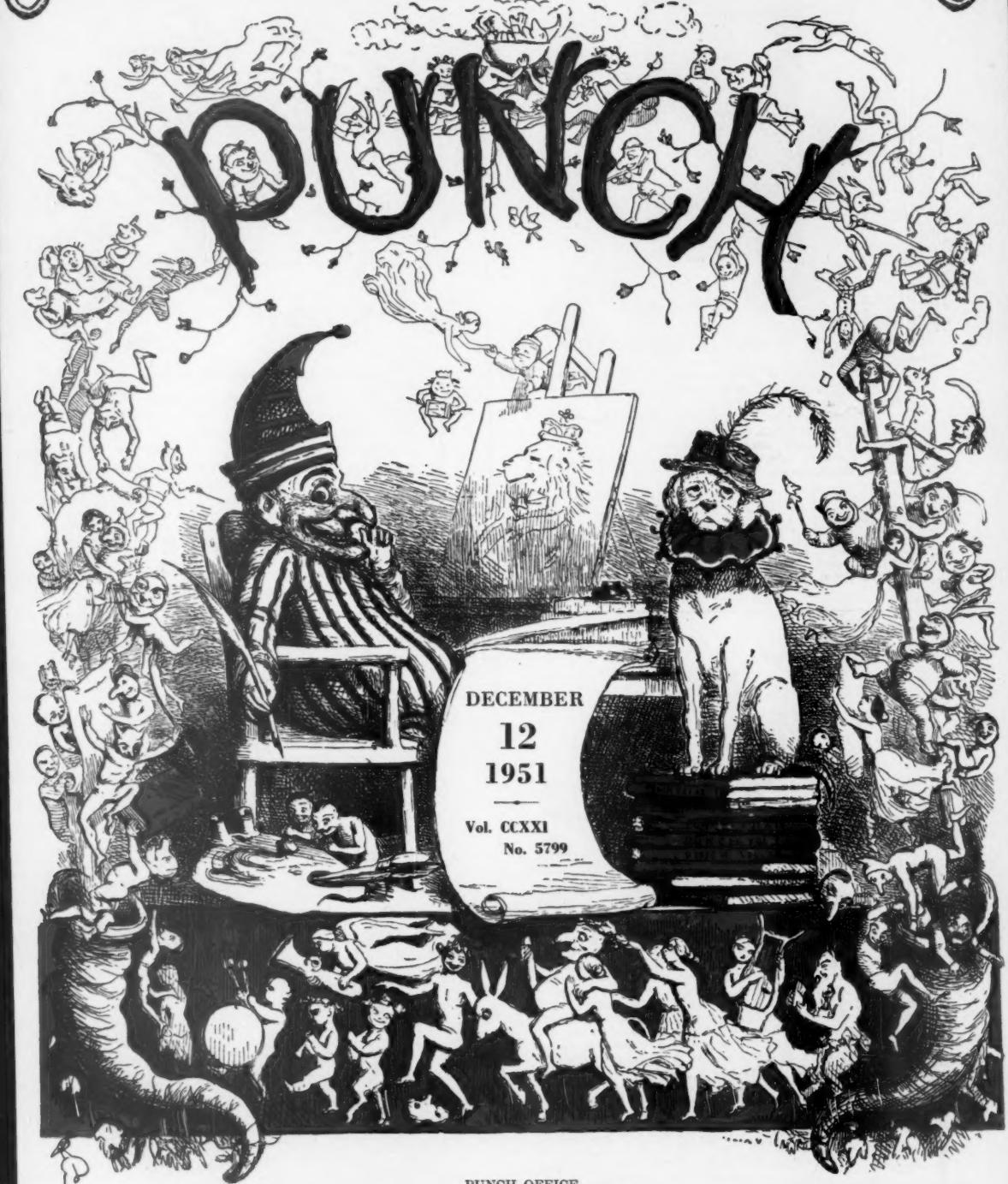
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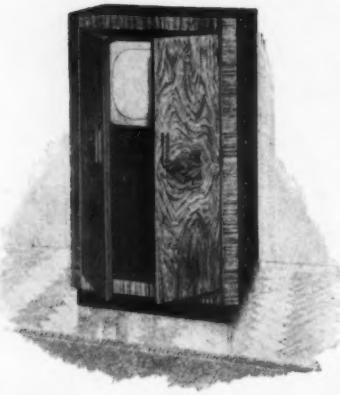
PUNCH

DECEMBER

12
1951

—
Vol. CCXXI
No. 5799





Technical excellence — plus...

Model 1800 television receiver (with 12" aluminised tube) combines technical excellence with a cabinet which is built to the traditional R.G.D. standard.

Finished in carefully selected figured walnut, it has full-length doors which, when closed, completely conceal the tube face and loudspeaker grille — an important feature for those who know that fine instruments should also be fine furniture.

RGD
*The Aristocrat
 of Radio and Television*
 ACCREDITED DEALERS IN EVERY TOWN



Discovery...

Jason sailed his little ship far into unknown seas before it brought him to the discovery of the Golden Fleece. Yet even the Argonauts could not have foreseen the journey of our modern Golden Fleece... that fine Sherry brought by Burgoyne's from the vineyards of far-off Australia. Pale golden, medium dry, Golden Fleece is indeed a discovery to the Sherry lover whose palate is critical yet whose pocket is grateful for a price modified by Imperial Preference.



'You smell like a morning in June'

Women who contrive to look bandbox-fresh at the end of a journey generally have one thing in common—a love of Yardley Lavender. Nothing can compare with that clean, reviving scent for banishing the weariness of travel, and keeping the brow cool and the fingers immaculate. To carry it with you is to arrive as dainty as you set out.

YARDLEY LAVENDER

9/6 to 36/8. Lavender Soap 1/7. Prices include purchase tax.
 33 OLD BOND STREET LONDON



A NEW old-style pipe tobacco at 4/- an ounce



ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LIMITED

Wear perfection on your wrist



A perfect movement with perfect accuracy. Accuracy that's protected by the Oyster case, accuracy that can't be harmed by dust or dirt or damp or water, or any of a watch's natural enemies. A man's Rolex Oyster, of course.



Beauty in miniature, good looks combined with good time-keeping. The skill of the Rolex designers gives you a watch that's as beautiful as fashion demands, as accurate as you demand.



TUDOR Why not ask your jeweller to show you the Tudor watch, a distinguished member of the Rolex family?



ROLEX
The world's first waterproof wrist-watch

The Rolex Watch Co. Ltd. (H. Wilsdorf, Governing Director) 1 Green St., Mayfair, W.1



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A USEFUL GIFT

A GIFT TO GIVE PLEASURE

A GIFT TO BE REMEMBERED BY

Ladies' Writing Set. Black, Brown, Blue, Grey, Pearl—
512 (incl. P.T.). One of the
exquisite gifts from the
Waterman's range.



Obtainable from all Stationers, Jewellers and
Stores from 25/- (incl. P.T.) with a matching
pencil for every model.

Give Waterman's - Give VALUE!

BRITISH MADE



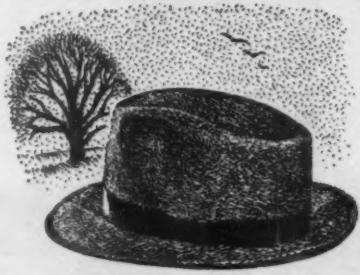
Evening Wear

For the many occasions during the coming months when evening wear will be worn, we can offer you an excellent choice of ready-tailored dinner suits and tails.

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OF COVENT GARDEN
THE COMPLETE MAN'S STORE

Junction of Garrick and Bedford Streets, W.C.2
Temple Bar 4477
AND BRANCHES

1952



CHRISTYS' WILDFOWL

A soft mixture felt with a sporting air. The choice of colour is strictly ornithological—Greenfinch, Eider or Merlin—but the hat may be worn with equal success by numismatists, philatelists and connoisseurs of good hats.

CHRISTYS' HATS

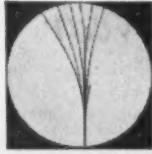
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CHRISTY & CO. LTD., 35 GRACECHURCH STREET, E.C.3
(Entrance in Lombard Court)

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4 reasons for liking Personna blades in this handy dispenser

1



Micro-photograph from a Pathé Pictorial film

Personna Precision Blades are hollow-ground so sharp that they can split a human hair into 7 separate strands

2



The Zipak puts a Personna Blade straight into your razor, unwrapped, untouched, ready for instant use

3



Zipak has a convenient underside compartment to dispose of discarded blades... it's neater... it's safer!

PERSONNA
Precision Blades

Shave with Personna and you shave with Precision

4

Costs no more. Ten Personna Precision Blades in the Zipak cost just 2/6... that's the price of the blades alone! So you are paying no more for more comfortable, longer-lasting shaves, and you get Zipak's extra convenience and safety free. Buy Personna in the faster, neater Zipak—today!

10 BLADES for 2/6
Also in packets of 5 for 1/3



*You know
you can't get
better value
for your
money
than*



All Wool —
Nylon Re-inforced
heel and toe —
they never shrink

Wolsey
CARDINAL
SOCKS

7/9 a pair

**"I think I'd like
a White Horse
better than anything"**



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Made from the finest Swordsteel by a firm with over 170 years experience in cutting edges. Wilkinson Sword Razors, attractively packed and supplied with Wilkinson Long Life Hollow Ground Blades, will give a man the smoothest shave he's ever had! Prices from

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FOR HER

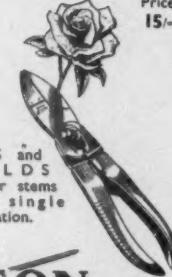
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The perfect instrument for light pruning, etc. Especially suitable for ladies.
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Ideal for normal grass cutting and hedge clipping. Suitable for ladies.

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SWORD**
PRODUCTS

The gift for the heads of the family...



BRYLCREEM
THE PERFECT CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Page 74/6

HERE'S A WONDERFUL WAY
TO FINISH YOUR SHAVE

SPLASH IT ON!
TO SOOTHE and comfort your skin after shaving, splash Aqua Velva into your hands and apply it to your face with a brisk rubbing action. Feel Aqua Velva refreshing your skin—cool, clean, comforting. Next—

INHALE!
CUP YOUR HANDS about your face and take a deep, deep breath. This way, you get the full benefit of Aqua Velva's 'wake-up' aroma—the tonic fragrance that gives you a wonderful feeling of well-being.

AQUA VELVA soothes and refreshes the face after shaving. It lends first aid to nicks and scratches. It contains, too, skin-freshening ingredients that help keep the face youthfully soft and good-looking.

Try Aqua Velva after shaving tomorrow. You'll know immediately why it's the most popular after-shave lotion in the world.



A WILLIAMS SHAVING PREPARATION

For the man with a
spring in his step . . .

. . . and commonsense in his wallet! It's really not necessary to pay fantastic prices for a good raincoat. If you examine this Robert Hirst 'York'—a coat with an 'air' about it, by the way—you'll immediately appreciate its quality. Fine attention to detail, superior lining materials, generous cut, and gabardine made in our own Yorkshire mills, are features not only of the 'York' model, but of all Robert Hirst Raincoats.



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HIGHER MATHEMATICS

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TWELVE PENCE MAKE ONE
SHILLING. TWENTY SHILLINGS
MAKE ONE BOTTLE OF
DUBONNET. THREE BOTTLES
OF DUBONNET MAKE A
VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.



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DUBONNET does not affect the liver

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You save money if you fly TWA to the USA during "Thrift Season." Ask your Travel Agent about these special TWA reductions.

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AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND via the USA

See and enjoy beautiful San Francisco, Hawaii, Fiji, on your way "down under." Fly by the TWA-BCPA de luxe sleeper service.

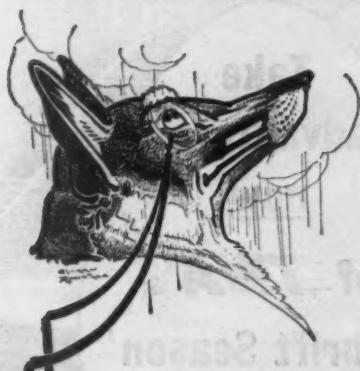


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London. Tel.: REGent 3211
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— the weatherproof that's equally at home with high society and low barometers

... as British as the weather
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Obtainable from leading outfitters everywhere

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Is your hair dowdy, lifeless ?

Do people whisper behind your back?

Do people class your hair as "dowdy"? If it's dry, lifeless, or if dandruff shows on your parting and collar, they probably do! So end it—now!

These things are signs of ugly Dry Scalp—and you can end Dry Scalp! A 20-second daily massage (don't just rub, move the whole scalp) with 'Vaseline' Brand Hair Tonic is what's needed.

Your hair will become easy to comb, naturally glossy, easy to keep in place. Get a bottle of 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic now!

Oh-oh-Dry Scalp!

Dry, lifeless, untidy hair, or flakes of dandruff in his parting and on his collar make him down as Mr. Dry Scalp. Is this you?



The difference in your hair after the daily 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic treatment is amazing! Hair looks healthy, well groomed, naturally glossy. Get 'Vaseline' Hair Tonic today.

Vaseline HAIR TONIC

THE DRESSING THAT ENDS DRY SCALP



27

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a changing
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Maximum retail prices
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18/- half-bottle
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As fixed by The Scotch Whisky Assn.

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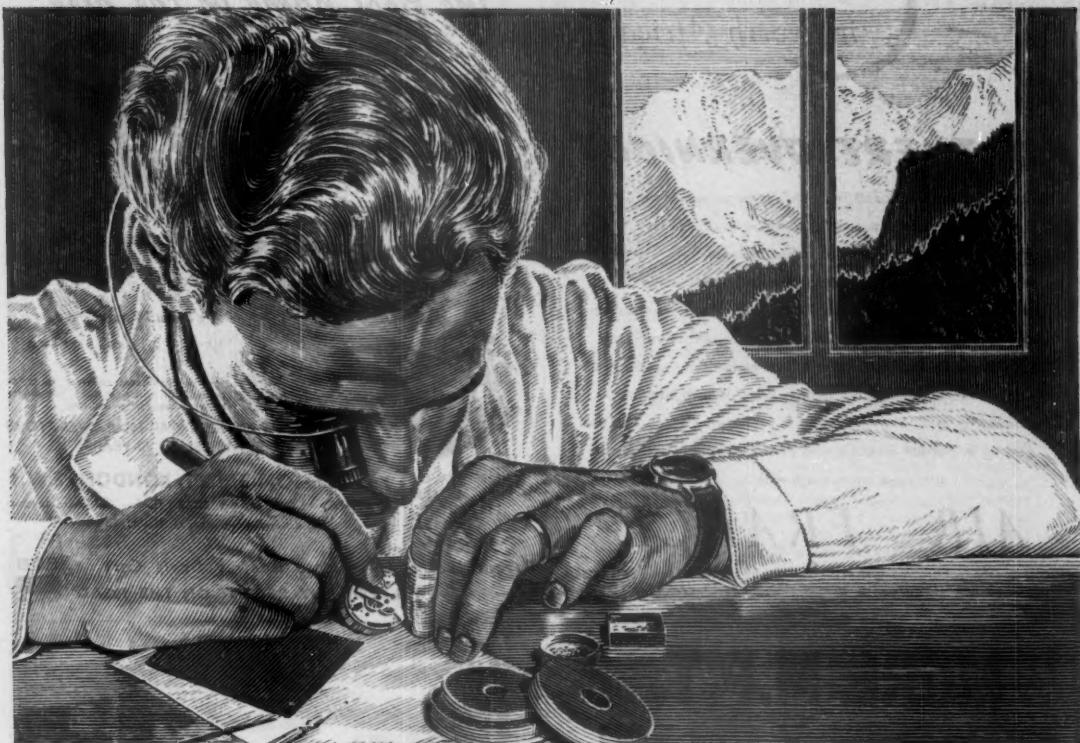
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PLAYER'S N° 3
The Quality Cigarette

also in boxes of 50



[3P108]

TIME IS THE ART OF THE SWISS



Years to measure a minute!

It takes many years to become a qualified Swiss "watch engineer." Yet one Swiss in every hundred devotes his life to the long laborious work of a watch or clock craftsman; and at this moment thousands of young Swiss are learning to be as good watchmakers as their fathers, uncles and elder brothers.

Hence the fame of the fine Swiss jewelled-lever watch. It is the masterpiece of a nation with an infinite capacity for taking pains. Each of more than a hundred parts is measured to a minute fraction of a millimetre. The balance wheel can travel 3,600 miles a year for many years without appreciable wear. The workmanship behind the works makes it a more accurate watch—a longer-lasting watch—a watch you can rely on.

But when you buy, buy with the help of an experienced jeweller. He can tell you exactly what you are buying. He can give you full choice from the latest styles. And his business would soon suffer if his customers didn't stay satisfied!

★ Fine Swiss watches can be bought from all good jewellers. No shop has exclusive rights. To keep your watch always at top-level performance, consult the repair expert at your jeweller's. No one else is so competent to give your watch the professional care it deserves.



The WATCHMAKERS



OF SWITZERLAND

MARRAKECH
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MORE M.P.T. MEANS MONEY FOR YOU



WATCH YOUR PRESSURES

Miles-Per-Tyre figures drop, costs climb when tyre-pressure wavers. Under-inflation leads to over-flexing, fabric ruptures, early failure. Over-inflation causes rapid tread wear, bruises, eventual casing fractures. Check pressures regularly; you'll see a difference in M.P.T.

WHAT DO TYRE EXPERTS SAY? Men in really tough transport jobs buy a big proportion of Henley Tyres sold today. They give tyres punishing tasks and watch mileage like hawks. They buy Henley Tyres because they know that Incentive-built tyres last longer. Better pay for better work in the Henley factory means more M.P.T. for you.

**BUILT WITH INCENTIVE
HENLEY TYRES**

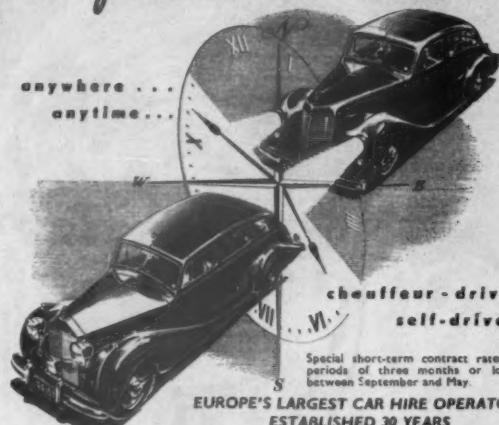


WATCH YOUR CHOICE

Your cost per mile depends on what tyres you buy as well as how you use them. You'll find it pays to run on Henley Tyres. They cost no more, but Henley's *Incentive* method builds a *plus* into every Henley Tyre — the care and craftsmanship that bring you a bonus in M.P.T.

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CINZANO

Its delicious flavour adds extra enjoyment to any cocktail you mix. Cinzano alone is delightfully refreshing and stimulating. It combines quality with economy.

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(Italian Sweet) 16/6
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EXTRA

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In theory, there is *no limit* to the size of picture with Projection Television — but, of course, if the picture becomes *too large* it is unsuitable for normal home use. The picture on the latest Philips Projection receiver is therefore 16 inches by 12 — the ideal size for the average home, so that you, your family and friends can sit back and enjoy the programmes in maximum comfort.

2. It gives the BEST picture

There are definite reasons why Philips Projection gives the *best picture* :—(1) The screen is flat right to the edge — which prevents all false curves or distortion as well as irritating reflections from lamps, windows or other objects in the room. (2) There is no glare — due to the fact that you don't have to look directly at the source of light, and also because on the dark screen it is not necessary to have such intense whites to achieve tone contrasts. (3) The gradations of tone are much more subtle.

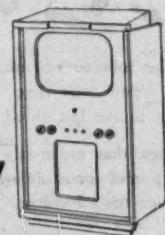
Now, therefore, with Philips Projection you can enjoy for the first time in your home the *sort of picture you have been used to all your life on the cinema screen*.

3. It gives the MOST ECONOMICAL picture

Philips Projection Television also gives the *most economical picture*, costing less per square inch of screen than any Direct Viewing Model. It is economical of space, too — since it gives a big picture in a comparatively small cabinet. And, of course, the workmanship and materials throughout are of the highest quality. As always, Philips is the name you can trust.



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PROJECTION
TELEVISION



DEPENDABLE RADIO • LAMPS AND LIGHTING EQUIPMENT • 'PHILISHAVE'
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Only a Remington can give you a CONTOUR shave

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the Finest Xmas Gift

Watch his eyes light up when he sees this streamlined electric shaver! It's a gift he'll use every day... with pleasure! He knows that Contour shaving will give him the smoothest shave he's ever had. So give the gift he'll like to have. Ask your dealer to show you the new Remington Contour 6, or write now for illustrated leaflet to Dealer Wholesale Division (Dept. S16)



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"Tis the tobacco of tobaccos. Cool, even burning, and fragrant to the last shred.

It brings that sense of comradeship and good fellowship that eases life's burdens.

Chairman Tobacco

4/4
per oz.
In 2 oz. vacuum
tins and 1 oz.
packets

Three strengths: Chairman medium;
Boardman's, mild; Recorder, full.
If any difficulty in obtaining, apply to
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got to STOP...



YOU can help to stop it! . . . Should squirrels be set alight? Or scores of unwanted tortoises be stoned to death? Or cats be mass-murdered for their saleable skins? Or jackdaws tongues slit to make them talk? Or dogs be kept on too-short chains for weeks on end? If you doubt that these things happen the RSPCA can quickly convince you to the contrary. More RSPCA inspectors are urgently needed to keep these and numberless other cruelties in check.

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Strength
and
Long Life

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B. & S. Cognac is specially blended for mixing with plain or soda water, but any way it's incomparably good and a wonderful pick-me-up. Obtainable from your local wine merchants, also—Harrods, Selfridges, Whiteleys and other leading London Stores. Ask for the Prunier B. & S. gift case.

Special offer 44/-

Full size bottle of
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plus two liqueur glasses
free in gift case.

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2½ lbs. of apples
to every flagon

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Choose here
For everyone on
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there's a **RONSON**
that's just right



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NEW Ronson Pencilliter, a precision-built Ronson and a sleek propelling pencil in one—you light with it, write with it! In black or grey enamel, in handsome leather-covered presentation case, 70/-.

It lights!
It writes!



Press, it's lit—Release, it's out!



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Ronson Princess, daintiest of Ronsons—fits the tiniest hand, the most crowded handbag. As shown 45/- Other finishes from 38/-.



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Ronson Queen Anne Table Lighter, finished in finely worked silver plate—a gift of lasting pleasure. Price 4 Guineas.



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Ronson Standard, precision-built and jewellery finished—favourite with all. As shown 38/- Other finishes from 43/-.



See the full range of these handsome
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Give a **RONSON**
WORLD'S GREATEST LIGHTER

FOR YOUR OWN PROTECTION—LOOK FOR THE TRADE MARK **RONSON**

Would it be

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Nylon

British Nylon Spinners Ltd., Pontypool, Mon.



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AN UNFORGETTABLE HOLIDAY spent in the poetic atmosphere of an ancient civilization under the sunny skies of an Italian winter. BIG REDUCTIONS FOR TOURISTS ON THE COST OF RAILWAY TRAVEL AND PETROL. "TRAVEL AT WILL" RAILWAY TICKETS—PETROL COUPONS.

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£8.15.0

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Each Avia carries a 12-month guarantee and is beautifully packed in a presentation case . . . From leading jewellers everywhere.



O
Omm... comfort!

and elegance too! The model illustrated is from the new "Glastonbury" range of Town and Country footwear by Baily's which is the last word in winter charm and luxury. These models, coming as they now do, within the utility price range, are a true economy and with their real sheepskin linings represent West Country craftsmanship at its very best.

Baily's slipper models too, in styles for men and women, are so cosy and attractive that they make perfect Christmas presents.



the "mayfair"

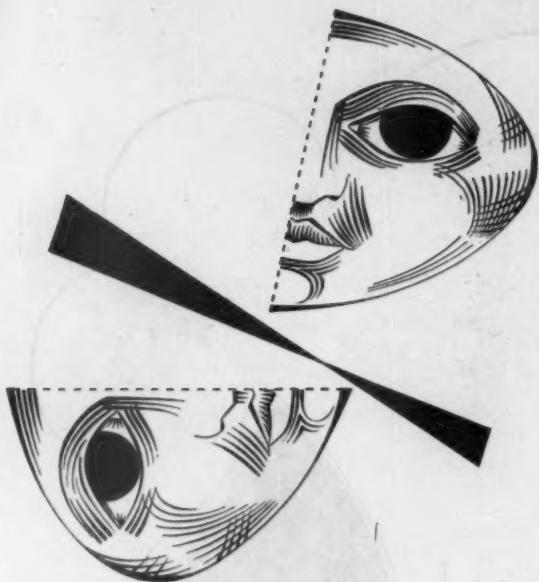


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Real Sheepskin

ESTABLISHED 1840 - 1951 - 100 YEARS

A. BAILY & COMPANY LIMITED (REF Z) GLASTONBURY SOMERSET



"Two eyes see more than one..."

Circumstances do arise when it is an advantage not to see too accurately. Nelson realised this and acted with commendable diplomacy on at least one occasion. There's nothing, however, about the NEW WORLD 1840 GAS COOKER to which one need turn a blind eye. It may be inspected under conditions where there is positively no deception, and no telescope is required to recognise its merits. Visit your local gas showrooms and see why so many clear-sighted people are saying —



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Much more than a mixer!

**It Whisks, Peels
Shreds, Sieves
Minces
Chops
Pulps
Liquidises
and Kneads**



With its quick-change attachments, the KENWOOD Electric Chef puts an end to aching arms and sore fingers in the kitchen—and gives you the chance to try exciting new dishes with the 'Continental' flavour. Write now for our leaflet and the address of your nearest retailer.

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THE MOST POPULAR REFRIGERATOR IN BRITAIN



MODEL S311
PRICE
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INC. TAX

Here's the perfect Christmas present for the whole family . . . Britain's most popular, best-at-the-lowest-cost refrigerator. *And you can get it now!* Table top to save kitchen space, beautifully designed and finished, ice-making, ample shelf area, *economical*. Go to your Prestcold Dealer . . . see this model for yourself . . .

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TABLE TOP SAVES SPACE.

There's over 6 sq. ft. of shelf area in the S311 refrigerator and it gives you a flat table top to save still more precious kitchen space. Yet it takes up little room—height 36", width 21", depth 23".



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Punch, December 12 1951

du MAURIER Cigarettes



50 du MAURIER 50

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The gift problem is more than usually difficult this year but in the Biro range you will find that economy of expenditure is allied to high quality and practical usefulness.

Superbly fashioned to the highest standard of British craftsmanship. Cases in grey, maroon or black. Cap and mountings of gold on solid silver.

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"Mummy Father Christmas has forgot to come"

Yes, it can happen! And there will be empty stockings in many homes this Christmas because there are still numbers of cases of hardship among Ex-servicemen and their families that can't be met by State relief.

The Army Benevolent Fund is the parent body of all regimental charities and provides financial aid for those charities which give personal attention to individual ex-soldiers in need.

The calls on this Fund are increasing considerably and every donation received goes to relieve cases of



real hardship where it is impossible to raise life above a bare restricted existence. Your help is needed NOW.

Please give all you can afford as a token of gratitude to the men who gave so much for you.

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HOW thrilled, how excited she'll be — to have a magnificent new Hoover Cleaner with all the latest features, saving her hours of hard work every week. And think of the satisfaction you will have in knowing you are giving her the *best*. Remember, the Hoover does so much *more* than ordinary vacuum cleaners — it not only keeps carpets cleaner, but by removing the damaging trodden-in, gritty dirt makes them last longer.

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PEOPLE
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FRAGRANT' TEA—
the blend for the
connoisseur — is
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can freely buy the finest teas for
this famous blend, it
is in greater demand
than ever.

DISTINCTIVE
TEA



W. H. & F. J. HORNIMAN & CO. LTD. EST. 1826



CHARIVARIA

PESSIMISTS fear that if the Big Four's Paris talks continue as smoothly as they did last week it will mean the end of civilization as we have known it for the past twelve years.



"The first of a series of inaugural lectures by newly-appointed members of the staff of the Canberra University College will take place on October 25.

It will be delivered by Professor H. W. Arndt, Professor of Economics at the college on the subject of 'The Unimportance of Money.'

Admission is free."
Canberra Times

As if it made any difference.



Billy Bunter, of Greyfriars, is to appear on television next February. Not a word to Bessie about this.



According to a medical report the average Londoner's life-span has gone up by over twenty years in the last half century. Anyone considering putting his name down for a house should be greatly encouraged by this.

Whoosh!

"HUMAN TORPEDO"
MAN DISCHARGED
Evening Standard



New uniforms designed for British Railways employees include peaked caps, with one-inch-wide gilt braiding, for guards. Disgruntled ticket-inspectors are being urged not to pull their punches.

"RICHMOND BACKS
DISJOINTED"
Sunday Times

Is there an osteopath in the stand?

IT'S TOO LATE—

to post Christmas parcels overseas. But, if you send PUNCH for 1952, our Greetings Card from you will go by air mail and arrive before Christmas. It will say that PUNCH is coming at your request.

A year's subscription for overseas costs 36/6 (Canada, 34/-). In the United Kingdom the cost is 30/-. Whether your friends are far away or here at home, now is the time to give us instructions to send them the most cheerful present yet devised—

PUNCH FOR 1952.

The yearly subscription includes 52 weekly issues, the Summer Number and the Almanack. Send your remittance to Dept. X, 10 Bouvier Street, London, E.C.4.

TENNYSON NEGOTIATES A ZEBRA

xxi

BEYOND the glassy screen I heard
Faint noises of the rumbling street;
Beneath my unavailing feet
The unavailing engine purred.

The chequer-board of white and black
Lay dim before me and below;
A voice within me bade me go,
Yet on a sudden urged me back;

For lo! upon the sacred square
I saw a darken'd figure loom
And move in silence thro' the gloom,
And pass, and go, I know, not where.

I watch'd; another came, and then
Another, till from black to white,
Like shadows on my aching sight,
Stretch'd out the endless line of men.

One falter'd, in the dark afraid,
And thro' the triple screen I saw
With stern intent the hand of Law
Upon his trembling shoulder laid.

Enough! Uncounting chance and cost,
I stirred, and at the dappled floor
Delaying long, delayed no more,
But stept upon the gas, and crost.

G. H. VALLINS

NATURE NOTE

BIRD lovers are asked to tell me what makes a robin go *flump, flump* against the glazed bit of a front door, and keep going *flump, flump* for about twenty minutes three or four times a day. I cannot find anything about it in the books. *Flump, flump* against glass is not part of the song nor the sub-song, nor any of the other noises said to be made by this bird, which is known to science as *Erythacus rubecula-melophilus*, poor thing, poor thing. It sounds like a small feather duster in violent action, only it doesn't dust, it dirties. When it has finished, the pane is covered all over with little muddy marks of claws.

It is our new robin that carries on in this silly way. He only came into residence during the last two months or so, and I suppose that our old robin is dead. Our old robin would never have behaved like that. When our old robin wanted to come into the house through the front door and not through a window he waited until the door was open. If he had been in a hurry, which he never was, he would certainly not have gone *flump, flump* against the glass. He would probably have rung the bell. When he came into the house he hopped around from room to room, making it pretty

clear that he was the proprietor, and then went out again. It was a kind of tour of inspection, made apparently to see that we were behaving ourselves. He was never in a hurry and seldom ate many crumbs. He had his moods and hobbies, but on the whole he was a tranquil, if slightly supercilious, bird.

Our new robin evidently wants something—but what? If you open the door he just whiffles away and stands on a wall. If you throw him crumbs he may take a couple, but more often not, and then while the crumbs are still there he goes *flump, flump* again.

There are several theories in the field. My idea is that he wants the house to be taken away. But you cannot do that without a permit from the local authority, or even from the Government itself. After all, he has a house of his own, or at any rate he will have in the springtime. A bird has no right to start knocking houses down just because they interfere with his view.

Somebody tells me that he sees his own reflection in the glass and is trying to fight it. My answer to that is that after a few weeks of cold war any reasonable robin would see that he was up against another champion and make some kind of compromise with it. You can't go on *flump, flump* for ever against a curtain of glass without wearing all your feathers away.

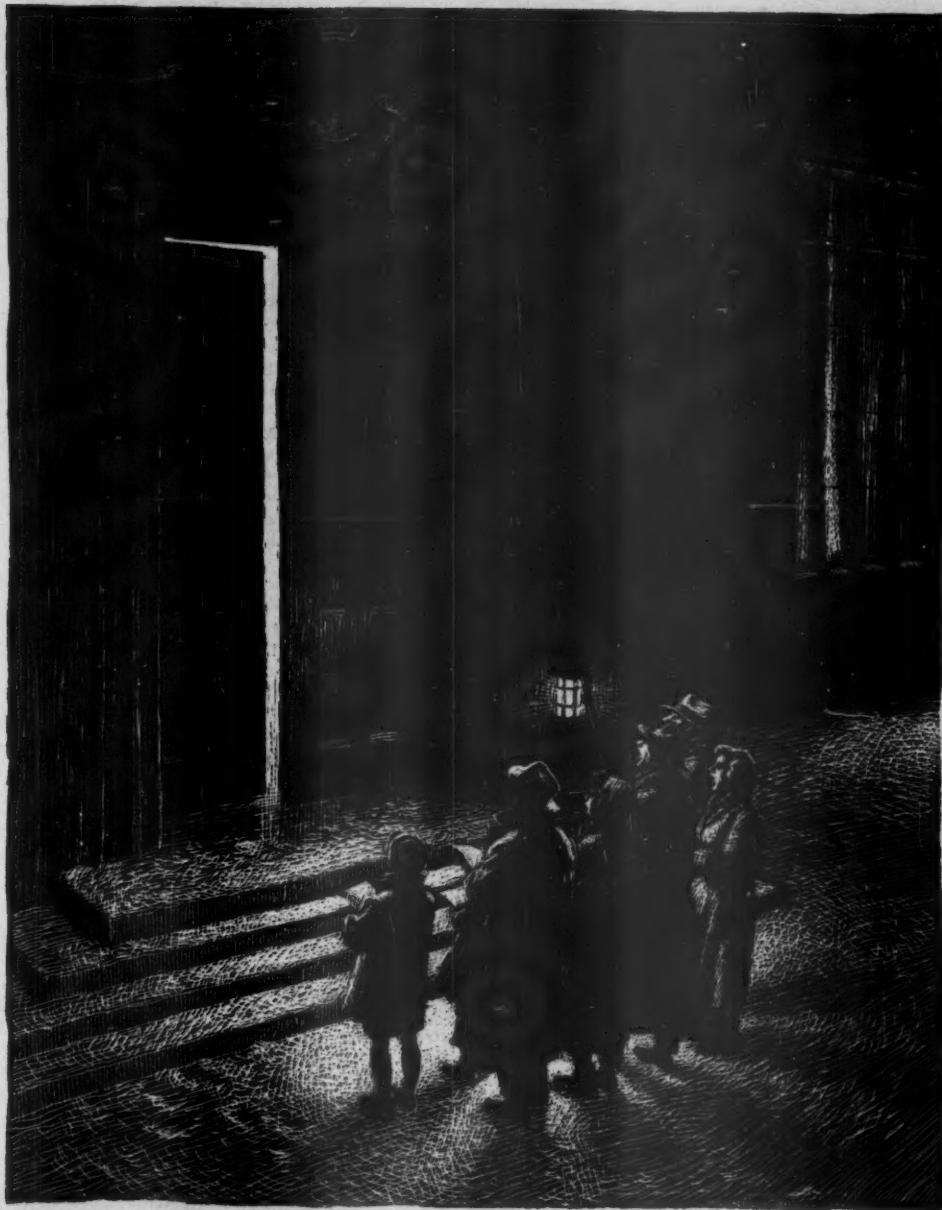
A mystic informs me that most likely there has entered into the soul of our new robin the spirit of William Rufus, about whom the "Cock Robin" rhyme was written, because of William's mysterious death in the New Forest and his still more mysterious burial. William the Red, he assures me, was a heretic, in fact he was a Catharist, and the rhyme is full of symbolic meaning which only the initiated can understand. Our new robin is therefore undergoing a kind of penance for the wickedness of a Norman king.

I like this explanation. But it lacks proof. "A note of anger or aggression is an explosive hiss, like spit of cat," say the books. "Sub-song, a sweet continuous inward warbling." Nothing about a soul in torment for sin.

A rather less reasonable hypothesis is based on the fact that a coconut has been hung from the branch of a cherry tree to provide food for tits. It seems to be just on the cards that our new robin is furious at the notion of a free food supply, which he doesn't want himself and finds to be in the possession of a lot of silly little blue and yellow ragamuffins that ought to fend for themselves.

But a new and more difficult question arises here. Can the soul of a bird really harbour all the higher instincts of mankind? Only a seasoned ornithopsychiatrist can say. There are just two other possibilities. "Males obtaining mates from late December," observes the book, and a little later on, "Centipedes are freely taken." If these are our new robin's troubles he should go out into society a bit more, and not keep barging in at our address. We don't keep a matrimonial agency in this house. And not many centipedes.

Evor



"HERE'S A HEALTH UNTO HIS MAJESTY"



"Remember the good old times when there was nothing in the shops?"

LOST PROPERTY

"AND while you're doing that," said Cora, "I have to pop and get some more sparkly stuff to finish off the tree. I'll see you over there in ten minutes."

"Very well," I said, wedging a Junior Chemistry Set more securely under my arm, and receiving a scratch on the chin from a passing holly bush.

"And don't forget," said Cora. "A number 10A."

"Yes," I said.

"Have you got the two cigars for Mr. Rimmer?" said Cora, partly disappearing into a throng of shoppers.

"Yes!" I called, backing into a stationary bus.

But Cora had already been swept away by the tide, parcels and all. I squeezed my way through the queue for the number 14 and approached a door marked "Office."

As I reached it an elderly lady who smelt of rum sidled up to offer me four curiously shaped balloons for sixpence. I got rid of her with some difficulty, and, opening the door of the office, was kissed heartily on the bridge of the nose by a tall conductress who held a sprig of imitation mistletoe over my head.

"And the same to you," I said, rather flustered, as she swept out clanking her coppers and giggling.

There was a sort of counter, where men in uniform were leaning. Some had peaked caps pushed to the backs of their heads, and silver buttons were undone, revealing knitted pullovers. A man with "Inspector" on his hat was blowing into a can of tea.

"Ted on the early, then, Bert, Wensday?" he said, as I approached.

"Nah," said the man behind the

counter, looking at me briefly. "Lates Wensday and Thursday, off Friday, earlies Satday, Sunday and Monday."

"Excuse me," I said, placing my belongings on the counter and moving a package of cold chicken sandwiches to make room for my hand. "Do I inquire here for lost property?"

Bert blinked at me reflectively. He seemed to be trying to place me.

"What about Jerry, then?" said the inspector, pouring tea into a lid. "On middles is he, Wensday?"

"You lost something, then?" said Bert. "Nah. Lates all the week, Jerry, except Friday. Done a swap with Nicholson, see?"

"They've messed that up a treat, then, 'aven't they?" said the inspector, chuckling craftily.

A fatherly grey-haired driver came and stood beside me, and began to watch my face expressionlessly.

"Yes," I said. "A small case, on a 10A bus."

"Lost 'is case, Bert," said the grey-haired driver.

"What was it, then?" said Bert. "More of a tatchy case?"

The driver looked at me expectantly.

"Well, yes," I said.

"Tatchy case," said the driver, turning to Bert. "Left it on a 10A."

"What about Harry, then?" said the inspector, reaching for a sandwich and looking inside it. "Be middles all the week, will 'e?"

"Nah," said Bert, disappearing behind the counter. "On that new stunt, Harry, where you don't get no dinner. They've got it in for Harry, good an' proper, ever since that letter he wrote."

"Shouldn't never have sent it," said the inspector. "I told 'im that on the Friday."

"Cut your chin, 'ave you?" said the grey-haired driver.

"Er—yes," I said.

He nodded.

Bert reappeared with a small case, which he slapped on the counter. The driver looked down at it solemnly, and then transferred his gaze to my chemistry set.

"This it?" said Bert.

I wasn't sure. As they all

crowded in to have a look I examined it carefully. I still wasn't sure.

"I think so," I said. "Can't be certain, as a matter of fact."

"Can't be certain, Bert," said the driver.

Bert tightened his grip protectively on two corners of the case. "What's in it, then?" he said.

"Er—er—oh, various things, really," I said. My face began to feel warm. An expectant silence had fallen.

"Clothes, like?" said Bert.

"Well, partly," I said. "There's a set of Ludo, for one thing. And a copy of *Black Beauty*. Oh—and an overshoe."

"Overshoe," said the driver. "For putting on over your shoes, like," he explained to Bert, "when it's snowy."

All eyes were on the case now. The inspector was munching steadily.

"What else, then?" said Bert. I took a deep breath.

"Some—some sardines," I said. "A small fairy with a wand. A pair of fleecy-lined gloves. And two bodices."

I licked my lips, and the silence deepened.

"Bodices," said the driver, nodding at Bert. "Two bodices."

Bert pursed his lips and eyed me dubiously. Then with a sudden deft movement he opened up the case.

It was full of toffee, in half-pound slabs.

As Bert fastened the case again the only sound was that of tea being sucked up by the inspector.

Bert jiggled the handle to and fro for a while, looking at me with narrowed eyes. Finally he reached a decision.

"Where was this 10a going, then?" he said.

"It was the three-fifteen," I said, "to Barleigh Cross."

There was an immediate easing of the tension. The men began to murmur to one another.

"Barleigh Cross?" said Bert. "The three-sixteen, you mean, to Barleigh?"

I nodded.

"Well!" said Bert, scornfully. "That's where it'll be, then! Barleigh Cross. If it's anywhere.

Couldn't very well be 'ere, could it? I ask you."

The grey-haired driver nodded. "That's where it'll be. Barleigh Cross." And as he walked gravely to the door, pulling on his gloves, the party broke up.

It was at Barleigh Cross, as it turned out. In fact, as Cora repeatedly pointed out on the long journey home, I should have known it would be, all along.

"You always seem to go the wrong way about *everything*," she said. "And for goodness' sake," she said, "put those four balloons under your coat. The whole bus is staring at me."

ALEX ATKINSON

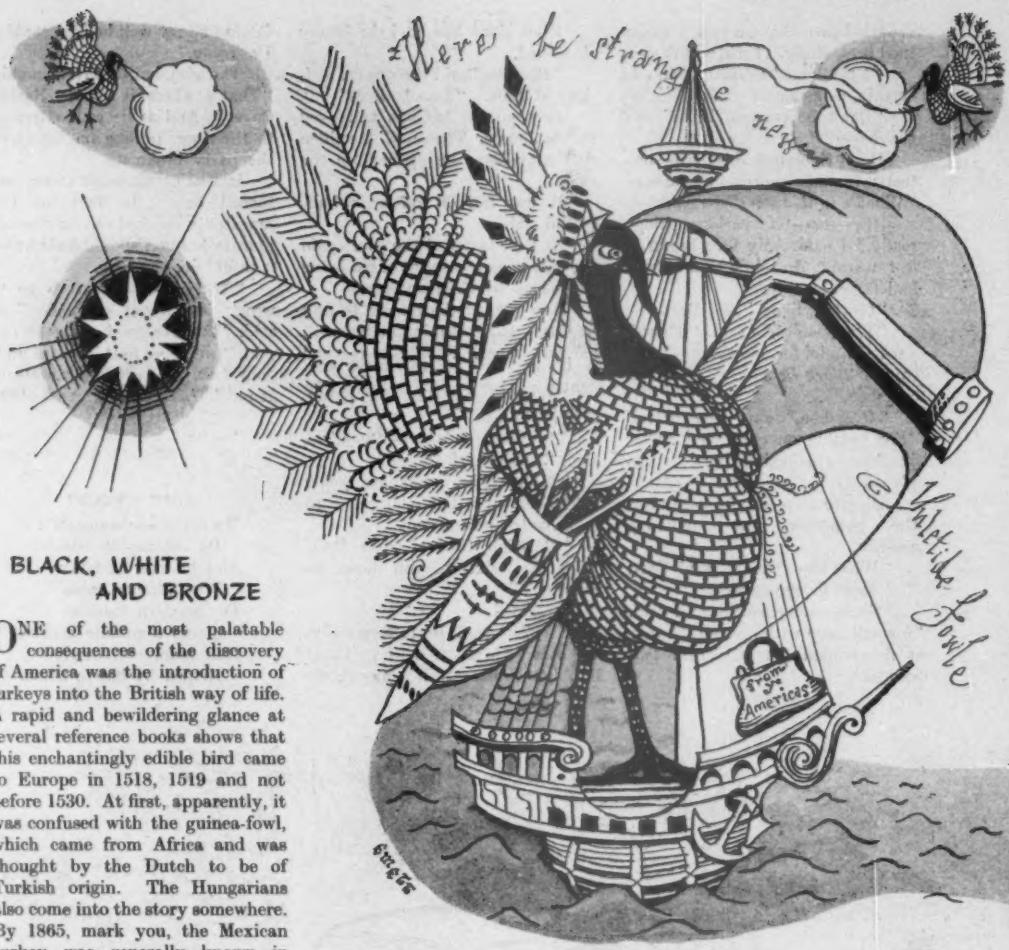
2 2

AUTO CYCLIST

'TWIXT those unmann'd
By automobile case
And he-man pedallers
With hirsute knees
The modern centaur
Steers a middle course,
Half man, half driver—
Helped by half a horse.



"With any luck, by the time you're married cars will be supersonic."



BLACK, WHITE AND BRONZE

ONE of the most palatable consequences of the discovery of America was the introduction of turkeys into the British way of life. A rapid and bewildering glance at several reference books shows that this enchantingly edible bird came to Europe in 1518, 1519 and not before 1530. At first, apparently, it was confused with the guinea-fowl, which came from Africa and was thought by the Dutch to be of Turkish origin. The Hungarians also come into the story somewhere. By 1865, mark you, the Mexican turkey was generally known in England as the Cambridge Bronze. The still existing wild turkey was once of a confiding character, but it has been hunted so remorselessly that it has developed a wary and unresponsive attitude to man, and is now rarely found as far west as Colorado. In short, the bird is of little academic interest.

Turkeys exist not for naturalists but for diners, and especially for Christmas diners. Ousting the traditional goose, though this is still popular in some parts of the North, the turkey has mysteriously attached itself to one meal in the year. Nobody knows why this is

—just as few people know why crackers are pulled at Christmas and not on Guy Fawkes Day, or why Christmas presents come down chimneys and fill stockings and hang on trees while birthday presents lie about on beds and breakfast tables.

The turkey is the real centre of Christmas festivity. Plum puddings and mince pies are all very well, very well indeed, provided they have been preceded by more solid fare; but, like the postman's Christmas box and the cigars and the short, sharp walk before the fruit cake at

tea, they are only trimmings. Properly cooked, the turkey is the heart of the meal. Since it counts as game, the bird should be hung for twelve to fourteen days. It must be cooked in a slow oven, lighted as soon as the cook gets up—whatever the weight of the bird apparently. It must never be turned with a fork, as this lets the juices run out, but by the joints, which have been left on for that purpose when the bird was drawn; they can easily be twisted off just before serving. The crop should be stuffed with the best pork-sausage meat. One authority

recommends a sauce made of mushrooms and oysters; but this takes the meal out of the category of family fun.

Turkeys are not impossible luxuries. This Christmas, despite the reduction of imports, there should be plenty available, and inflated prices will exist only in the inflated imaginations of journalists. Prices will probably be lower than last year, in spite of the rise in cost of production. You are shocked by this sordidly economic phraseology? You prefer to think of the birds shyly nibbling corn from the hands of the turkey-girl, dressed much like a goose-girl, while the sails of the windmill revolve lazily, the toad beneath the harrow revolves energetically and the hands of the stable clock do not revolve at all? Unfortunately for the sentimentalists, but happily for the eating public, turkeys are no longer merely picturesque sideshows on the farm. Like bees, rabbits and mushrooms they have been upgraded into an industry, one devoted entirely to increasing the pleasures of life, unlike some industries I could name. Turkey-growers pride themselves on

huts or pens (the floors of which are wire-mesh to prevent contact with soil-born disease), the incubators where the chicks spend their first thirty-six hours while they dry off after hatching and become adjusted to a world which is bigger and less cosy than an egg, and the oil-heated brooders where they live a kindergarten life for the next three weeks.

A mixed farm can produce most of the vegetable proteins that the turkeys need, and their menus include dishes like beans, barley and oats, or peas, barley, oats and wheat. Fish and animal proteins have to be bought and are expensive and tightly rationed. If more foodstuffs were available and if more housewives were prepared to serve turkey all the year round, as some are beginning to be, production could be stepped up and prices would rapidly fall.

The largest breed, the Bronze, is admirable for hotels, with their large ovens; the ordinary housewife finds that her stove gets uncomfortably jammed with a bird that weighs more than fourteen to sixteen pounds, and she prefers the smaller Norfolk Black. The Austrian White is increasing in popularity, and some growers are breeding a still more buxom Bronze. The metallic sheen of the Bronze, the pure glare of the White and the black and red décor of the Norfolk make a turkey farm much gayer than

the haunts of the drabber hen. In bearing and colour some turkeys are almost in the class of peacocks. As we walked round his farm Mr. Peele was greeted with affectionate choruses that varied with the breed. A choir of Whites made a noise like a pack of hounds, no doubt an Austrian characteristic.

Turkeys are not all home-grown; but the complications of fowl-pest and economics (neither of them subjects I have ever wanted to

investigate) are likely to make us depend this year mainly upon what we can produce ourselves. Anyway, the best turkeys in the world come from Norfolk: I know that this is true, as I was told so on the spot. The area south-west of Norwich, and in particular the part of it called "The Breckland," is the centre of the industry, which may have originally settled there because the soil was easy on the delicate feet of the birds or, perhaps, because there were wide arable lands for the birds to run on and plenty of corn for them to eat. This region is also good at flint-knapping.

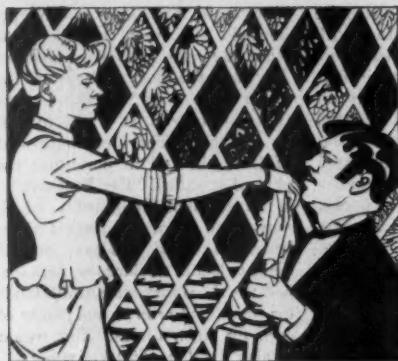
Turkeys give not only roast meat to the human race but various by-products. Their eggs are used primarily for breeding, but egg-laying strains are being developed, and as the eggs are unrationed and meaty (they weigh from three to three and a half ounces) there is a big market for them. If you order an egg sandwich in an hotel you will probably get one filled with turkey egg. The feathers used to be sold in a jumbled mass and were usable only as manure. Nowadays the wise farmer sorts as he plucks and the tail feathers are stuck on bamboos to make dusters, the secondary tail-flights lure fish, the wing-flights go to darts manufacturers, the body feathers fill feather-beds, and some of the broad tail-feathers are used to decorate Red Indian suits for boys.

Every Christmas exciting tales appear about raids on turkey farms, with trucks tearing through the East Anglian night as if carrying beer for Al Capone. There is less of this kind of drama than there used to be, and various secret arrangements make the prospect for the crook particularly uninviting this year. This periodical having a soft spot for law and order I will not say more, a reticence easy to maintain as I was not told very much. One grower, to whom I had been officially recommended, replied to my humble request for an interview by telegraphing "Nothing doing." If this meant that business was slack, I sympathize. I prefer to imagine that I was taken for a scout from a gang. R. G. G. PRICE



keeping up with the latest methods and improving on them.

Among the kind informants to whom I owe any facts you may find lying about in this report was Mr. Frank Peele, a learned student of turkey-culture who has devised any number of ingenious improvements on his extensive farm. Under his guidance I saw the breeders being hardened on the stubble, the birds for the Christmas trade enjoying the luxuries of being fattened up in



(Miss Julie)

Miss Julie—ANITA BJÖRK; JOHN—ULF PALME

AT THE PICTURES

Miss Julie—I Want You

FOR me, the Swedish film of STRINDBERG's play *Miss Julie* (Director: ALF SJÖBERG) is an example of very great film-making skill that nevertheless has remarkably little effect on the emotions. I took immense pleasure in it as a technical job, but I felt quite detached. I realize that this is a matter of personal temperament; I can imagine some people being profoundly moved by the narrative and remaining quite unconscious of the brilliance with which it is put over—and from one point of view of course this is the ideal. The original play I admit I don't know at all, but certainly this adaptation (by the director himself) makes an absolutely first-rate film, in a key—perhaps a typically Swedish key—to which we are not, these days, accustomed. The words that come to mind for describing or suggesting it—clear, luminous, vivid, fresh, radiant—are all, when you consider them, adjectives that could refer to the impression given by the photography alone; but it is true that they may be metaphorically applied to the style of the whole film. The story is fundamentally the simple old one of the wild, beautiful daughter of the manor who is seduced—under great provocation—by the personable servant; the opportunities for poetic, symbolic,

decorative treatment come from the setting, the big country estate (tiny figures in vistas of enormous trees, rolling waves of park-land in the slanting sunlight), and the time (Midsummer Eve, the Scandinavian festival, more than fifty years ago). Flashbacks are included—but both "flashbacks" and "included" seem crude and misleading words; the girl and the man recall in talk with each other significant episodes of their youth on the estate, but these are so delicately and smoothly introduced, so perfectly led

up to and developed and allowed to melt away, that they are as much integral parts of the whole as lines of a poem. I'm aware that this probably sounds pretentious and extravagant—possibly I protest too much from an uneasy feeling that I ought to have been more moved emotionally. I hope most people will be, for dispassionately considered the film is quite admirable.

Obviously *I Want You* (Director: MARK ROBSON) is an attempt to repeat the effect of *The Best Years of Our Lives*, with very much thinner material. "No three words," says the publicity, referring to the title, "ever meant so much to so many people"—but the plainest meaning of the phrase here is that it is used by some phantom U.S. recruiting sergeant, or by Uncle Sam himself; for the basic theme of the picture is the effect of the war in Korea on small-town family life in the U.S., and the springs of the plot (what plot there is) depend on the conflict between the

impersonal, patriotic implications of the title and the highly personal meaning given to it by the wives or sweethearts or mothers of the men concerned. It's simple, "warm," emotional, very sentimental stuff, leavened with the obvious humours and problems of family life and made constantly entertaining superficially by the skilful presentation of well-observed domestic and community detail and dialogue. That is the entertaining surface; below that, the film has really very little of value to offer.

* * * * *

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The London shows, apart from the familiar, long-established French ones, are mostly not of much interest. There's another long-established one, the attractive musical *An American in Paris* (29/8/51), and there's the latest group of Maugham stories, *Encore* (28/11/51). Otherwise I would only mention *The House in the Square*. More about this next week: it is a new adaptation of the play *Berkeley Square*, remarkably interesting in several ways.

Again there are no new releases, either, that rouse my enthusiasm. Remember the earlier ones *Rommel*—*Desert Fox* (24/10/51), *High Treason* (7/11/51), and *Detective Story* (31/10/51).

RICHARD MALLETT



(I Want You)

Jack Greer—FARLEY GRANGER
Carrie Turner—PEGGY DOW

FROM THE CHINESE

Any Questions?

THREE wise men
Sat on high in the market-place,
Ready to answer
The questions of the multitude.
"Ask us," they said,
"For we are very wise,
Our opinion of the Rulers,
The making of treaties,
The government of other
countries,
The conduct of trade,
The growing of crops,
The public Treasure,
The collection of taxes,
The rights and duties,
The correct relations,
Of master and man,
Of husband and wife—
Ask us, O People,
And we will answer."

There came to the market-place
The aged Chin Yang,
And he said "O Wise Men,
I will ask you nine questions:
'What is a cough?
What is a sneeze?
And what is a hiccup?
What is wind?
What is fog?
What is cloud?
What is rain?
What is snow?
And what is hail?'"

Then the People
Were amazed and angry,
For these were simple things
Familiar to all,
Nor was it seemly
To trouble the Wise Men so.
"Well," said the first Wise Man,
"A cough?
All my life I have been coughing.
But, now you ask me, Chin Yang,
I cannot precisely say
For what reason I cough
Or what it is that I do."
"A sneeze," said the second Wise
Man,
"Is a sneeze.
It is caused by pepper
And other irritations.
But the workings of a sneeze
I am unable to explain."
"A hiccup," said the third Wise
Man,
"Is a spasm."



"It's the sitter-in; she can't come."

"That is known to all", said old
Chin Yang.
"But where is the spasm,
And what began it?"
"I cannot tell you," said the third
Wise Man.
"Wind?" said the first. "Well,
wind
Is something to do
With hot air rising
And the cold air
Rushing in."
"Why, then," said the old man,
"Are there wild winds
In the northern regions
Where there is never
Any hot air?"
"I cannot imagine," said the first
Wise Man.
"But I can tell you
About cloud, fog, and rain.
There is moisture
Contained in the air.
In the heavens
It is a cloud.
Near the earth
It is fog.
The cloud releases moisture,
And there is rain:

It is very simple."
"But why," said Chin Yang,
"Do some clouds release their
moisture,
And others not? What happens
When fog goes away? And why
Does it not rain?"
The Wise Man was silent.
"Snow," said the second Wise
Man,
"Is frozen rain."
"Hail," said the third,
"Is frozen rain."
"But what is the difference?"
Said the old Chin Yang.
"Ask me," said the third Wise
Man,
"Another."
"Nay," said the Ancient One,
"For after these answers
I do not itch to know
Your opinion of the Rulers,
The making of treaties,
And the other high matters."
The multitude
Then went away, murmuring:
And the Wise Men
Were not engaged again.

A. P. H.

OVERCOMING CONSUMER RESISTANCE

BROODING, as I often do, on the calamitous state of our hard-currency reserves, I cannot but wonder that nobody has ever called the Chancellor's attention to J. Foscoo and Son, Oil and Colourmen, Household Suppliers, Builders' Merchants and General Ironmongers, of 22 High Street, Bakeham, Surrey. These two British business men could without doubt, if it were put to them as a stern call-to-duty, throw a bridge over the dollar gap in less time than it takes to turn Persian oil into Dead Sea fruit.

Their salesmanship has about it something of the hypnotic. I know most of their methods, but I have yet to come out of their shop without buying something I'd never even heard of, let alone wanted, when I went in. Take this morning, for instance.

To Son, who was behind the counter, I said "A pound of one-inch nails, please."

"Thank you, Mr. Brooks," he answered. "You'd want brass nails, I expect?"

Note the technique. Mark the subtle emphasis on the word *you* in the question. Iron nails might be appropriate for the *hoi pollio*, but for Mr. Brooks brass nails, costing six times as much, were barely good enough.

"Iron nails, please," I said.

As Son weighed and wrapped them I heard a wheezing and scrabbling on my right, and when I pocketed my change I nearly poked J. Foscoo in the eye with my

elbow. He had taken up a strategic position between me and the door.

"Before you go, Mr. Brooks," he said, "look." He opened his hand and disclosed an appliance of some sort made of brass and rubber.

"Not to-day, thanks," I said with decision, and made for the door. But Son meanwhile had executed a supporting movement and now took up position on his father's flank, cutting off my line of retreat.

"Patent tap-washer," explained J. Foscoo. "Show you how it works. Tap back yonder."

They began to advance, taking small shuffling steps, and like a couple of sheep-dogs they manœuvred me to the back of the shop, where J. Foscoo dismantled a tap and slipped in the fitment. I couldn't deny that it did seem an ingenious gadget.

"How much is it?" I asked.

"Only sixpence."

"I'd better have half a dozen."

J. Foscoo turned away to fill this order. Son came forward, like the other figure of a weather cottage, with a dilapidated garden-spade. This, carried horizontally, pinned me effectively in my corner.

"I've got something here, Mr. Brooks," he announced, "what I know you'll want."

"I'm afraid I'm in rather a—"

"A new rust remover. Watch."

He dipped a rag in a tin and rubbed briskly on the rusty metal. The rust vanished like mud before a jet of water. "Only just on the market, Mr. B. Three-and-six a tin."

"H'm."

"A tin o' this in your tool shed 'ud save you pounds on your garden tools."

"That's true," I said. "I'll have one."

Son screwed up his lips. "Now listen, sir. One tin's no good to you. You got metal windows in your house, haven't you? Think how they rust away under the paint. Look at that old car o' yours. A couple of tins of this stuff 'ud pretty near double its value, I reckon."

"I don't . . ."

"Supplies are short, sir. Stocks

won't last. If I sell you just one tin you'll be rounding on me next week for not looking after you. I might even lose your custom."

"Well . . ."

"For your own good, Mr. Brooks, I couldn't let you have less than three tins."

He took a firmer grip of the spade and wedged it against the wall.

"Oh, all right," I capitulated. "Give me three, then."

Exit Son, with spade. Enter J. Foscoo, pushing wheelbarrow.

"I want—" he began.

"No, Foscoo." At this point the seller's market ended. I summoned up my resolution. "There's no more business to be done to-day," I said. "I've levelled my books."

"Pneumatic rubber tyre," he pointed out wistfully. "Ball-bearings. Aluminium construction. Light as a feather. Feel the balance, sir."

"Take it away and let me get out."

"Only five pounds ten. Save you a morth of backshe in the garden."

Luckily the door-bell rang at this moment and interrupted what might have become an ugly scene. J. Foscoo seized the handles of the barrow and trundled it to the front of the shop ready for an assault on the new customer. I collected the rust remover from Son and made my escape.

It had been a close thing. And remember: I've been dealing with the Foscoes for years. Suppose—and this is my point—that these two men were unleashed upon unsuspecting Americans?

Let Mr. Churchill act. Let him send for Foscoo. In a matter of days British films, Empire tobacco, perhaps even the Albert Memorial, will be on their way to New York, and a lorry-load of bricks, a patent cement-mixer and half gross of camel-hair paint brushes will be on their way to Chartwell.

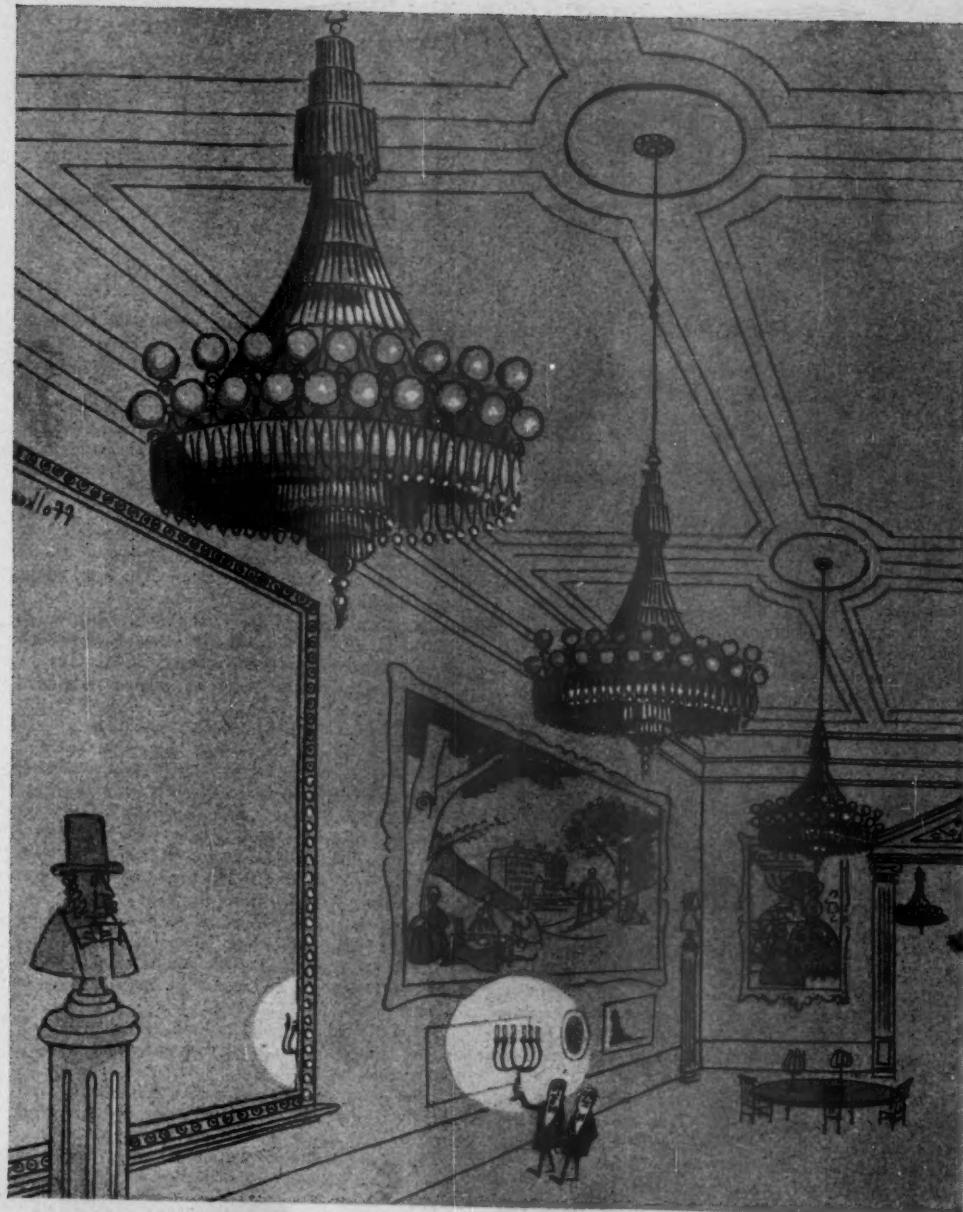
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Taking the Biscuit

"A new grammar school boy should be fond of study for study's sake."

Hertfordshire Express





"My father could afford to run a car and the chandeliers."



FLASH!

"FLASH!" shouted Medway, putting down the telephone and turning to the operator. "Flash, I say!"

"Right," the operator said, his hands at the ready on the keys.

"London!" Medway cried. "Horseguards dismounted!"

From the other end of the desk, before the operator could begin, an even voice said quietly "Hold that flash."

"Right," the operator said. His fingers, poised over the teletype machine, relaxed.

"Getting a little over-excited, aren't you, Medway?" the even voice went on. It belonged to Lance Roundpond, senior editor of World-Wide Press.

"No, sir," the young man said. "I don't think so, sir." His face was pale but his voice steady. "I have confidence in my judgment, sir."

"And a very good thing," Roundpond said. "Very good. But that hardly seems flash material. Have you studied the manual?"

"Yes, sir."

"And what does it say about flashes? When do we use flashes, Medway?"

"In cases of world-shaking importance only, sir."

"Does this strike you as such a case, my boy?"

"Yes, sir, it does," Medway replied stoutly.

"I am sorry to hear that, Medway. Very sorry. It leads me to have grave doubts about your judgment. No doubt the hundreds of newspapers we list among our clients would feel the same way."

Medway bit his lip and stared at the floor. "Yes, sir."

"I am sadly perturbed," the senior editor went on. "You seem nervous, Medway. I've noticed it before. Perhaps the strain is too much. By no stretch of imagination could that have been called a flash. A bulletin, conceivably. Never a flash."

Throughout the painful conversation there had been a silent onlooker, Patmore, the kindly, experienced assistant senior editor. He had seen youthful spirits quenched before, the divine spark lost. Tactfully he intervened. "Perhaps a hot bulletin," he said.

Roundpond wheeled about, prepared to be devastating, until he noticed the appeal in Patmore's eye. "Yes," he said slowly, "a hot bulletin. But not a flash."

He looked back more kindly toward the offending Medway, to find him now sobbing silently on the table. As he stared, Patmore walked over and placed his hand on the young man's heaving shoulder. "We all make mistakes, my lad," Patmore said.

"All of us," Roundpond said.

There was a sudden outburst from Medway. "Six months," he cried. "Six months on the desk at World-Wide and never a flash. It isn't fair. Oh, it isn't fair. There's nothing to go on for."

Patmore glanced over to Roundpond. "Lad wants a bit of incentive," he said. "It's understandable. It's natural enough to want to send a flash. Anyone gets tired of routine stories, with only an occasional bulletin."

"I offered to let him make it a hot bulletin," the senior editor said. "That's next thing to a flash."

Patmore tapped the shoulder, now twitching slightly with declining passion. "How would that do?" he asked. "Make it a hot bulletin."

Medway raised his head. "It isn't the same. You know that. Not the same at all. Hot bulletins have to be typed and handed to the operator. Flashes can be dictated." The head dropped again.

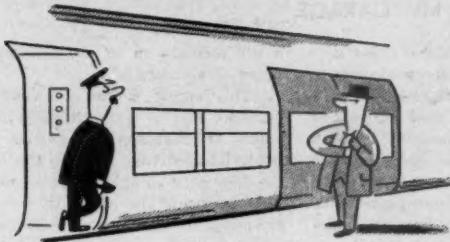
Roundpond shrugged, then beckoned Patmore over. They whispered for a few moments, and Patmore made another attempt. "How would this be?" he asked. "We let you give the flash but the operator doesn't send it."

Medway looked up, underlip quivering. "No, sir," he said. "I can't be bought off that easily." He seemed to be growing bitter.

There was another whispered conference, and Roundpond was seen to scowl, then nod his head resignedly.

"All right, Medway," Patmore said. "We'll let you go ahead. Where did that story come from, by the way?"

"From Grimes, sir," Medway said animatedly. "He said he didn't have time to give me any more. He said he had to dash out for more details, but he'd call in again as soon as he could."



"All right. Let it go."

Eyes alight, Medway turned once more to the operator. "Flash!" he shouted. "London—horseguards dismounted!"

As the operator punched out the news Medway leaned back in his chair, smiling happily. After a moment he scrambled hastily to his feet. "I can't thank you enough, sir," he said to Roundpond. "Or you, sir," he went on, turning to Patmore. "You've made this the most exciting day of my life."

"Nothing at all," Roundpond said gruffly.

Patmore contented himself with a sympathetic smile.

At that moment the telephone rang. Medway, answering it, spoke a few excited syllables, then put it down. He turned to the operator. "Kill that flash!" he shouted. The operator punched again.

Medway turned to the editors. "It seems it wasn't true," he said.

"You see, my boy," Roundpond said wisely, with a glance that took in Patmore, "there's a reason for the manual. It isn't simply an old man's device for taking the joy out of life."

But Medway hardly heard him. "Gee whiz," he said delightedly, "a flash and a kill on the same day! Gee whiz, sir!"

THE RIVER

THE river is less boundless than the sea,
Which makes it easier to find your way in.
Its being beachless causes it to be
Less suitable for juveniles to play in.

The sea is hard, and disciplines its users;
The river soft and pliable in scope;
Rich men indulge in it in cabin cruisers,
And poor men fish in faint, ill-founded hope.

The river-folk are idle, smooth and clever,
The sea-folk simple, high-souled, silent
hearties.

The sea can make you sick, the river never,
Which makes the better bet for picnic parties.

The sea goes up and down in ebbs and flows
In an occult and sometimes violent manner:
The river does it in successive goes;
You steer into a lock and pay a tanner.

Amenities do not admit of measure,
Nor reason say in what we shall rejoice.
The merely being water-borne gives pleasure:
You pay your money and you take your choice.

P. M. HUBBARD

THE MAN IN MY GARAGE

THE place where I garage my car is in an L-shaped barn of great age, leaky, fungoid and, except where pin-points of light mark the missing tiles, as black as night. The doors, where it has them, are willowy, wayward affairs of twelve-foot-high boards, insecurely cross-barred in a counter-motif of old clothes-props and broom-handles. The door to my bit (which is at the top end of the L) has a sort of supplementary door at one side, narrower but not less tall, and this must be folded back flat against the door proper and pinned with a hasp and bent nail before the whole can be swung, squealing its bottom bolt over the concrete, flat against a lichenized and crumbling wall; the bolt drops into a hole, unless the daily excavation of mud and minced leaves has been neglected. It is not a cheap garage; there is a hole in the floor; I have met toads there. But I have been happy in it, really, and I shall be sorry to go. Yet I must. Because of the Man in it.

During my early tenancy I used to take as long as four minutes to get the door open and the car out. My present time is seven seconds

flat, and upon this and other constant factors (the forty seconds to run down the village street, the scientific certainty that the gate at the bottom of the lane will fly back and wedge in the open position when kicked at a certain point on the middle bar) my morning schedule of departure for the two-mile-distant station is based. If all goes well I can arrive on platform four simultaneously with the second compartment of the third coach of the eight-nine, at a point where we are both doing six miles an hour with brakes full on.

Sometimes of a summer morning leisured friends of mine who have risen early to enjoy Nature gather near my garage to watch me in action. They say that it puts the seal on their enjoyment and gives them an appetite for breakfast. I have no objection to this, as long as they stand well back and don't talk. My time-table is finely calculated and, like all delicate mechanisms, susceptible of easy derangement.

As I round the corner into the rutted lane, spraying toast-crumbs and scattering mud and small stones, the church clock is on the fourth stroke of eight, which means that it is a minute past. Before and above me tower the garage doors, secured with unexceptionable fastidiousness by Grounger, whose car lies next to mine, who daily comes and goes later than I do, and who has never yet saved me a couple of seconds by leaving our shared door off its hasp. I rush at this narrow door and smash at it with my brief-case; during the split second in which the hasp is thus eased I pluck out the bent nail which secures it, slam back the narrow door against the broad one and transfer the nail to the hasp in its new, or folded-back, position. Simultaneously I hook up the inside bolt with the toe of my right shoe, reach up to disengage the heavy wooden latch, which is roughly the size and shape of a short Lee-Enfield, and, hurling back the door with a double-handed thrust, spring backwards—to turn at this point would cost me

a full second—on to the running-board of my car.

This spring serves a twofold purpose, and is not a time-saver only. Overhanging the door is a richly-foliaged tree, and the top of the door must completely overcome its resistance if the bolt is to drop: in springtime the tree showers me with a confetti of tiny white blossoms; in full summer its resistance is more determined, and twigs and even branches fall; in the autumn, leaves come dropping and camouflage my hat; in winter, an avalanche; when the tree is fat with rain it cascades water, upwards of a gallon. It is essential to jump clear, therefore. And according to the season my double-handed thrust must be calculated to the nearest foot-ounce, otherwise the bolt will never reach the hole or—if the thing is overdone—will go in and bounce out again, so that the scraping, slow-wobbling, implacable structure will close again just as I have engaged reverse. When this happens I reverse my tempo instantly. There is no point in hurrying now. The three seconds needed to secure the door have lost me my train.

So much for the garage. Now for the Man in it.

He lives and operates among tradesmen's vans and other small tenantry, in the utter darkness of the short end of the L. At least—no. He does not live there. If he did, and I could rely upon his daily presence, mysterious but not unexpected in the shadows, I could have incorporated him, by this time, in my routine. He is sometimes there. I don't know what brings him, say two mornings a week, and I don't know what he does when he has been brought. I have never had time to see. I don't really want to know.

But I have formed the opinion, subconsciously and on no valid ground that I know of, that it is something to do with a bicycle. He has arrived well in advance of me—perhaps as much as a half-minute before—on this bicycle, and he is doing something to it; covering it with a rug, perhaps, unstrapping a



"We apologize for the break in transmission, which was due to lack of organization, gross negligence, and complete inefficiency on our part."

mackintosh, getting sandwiches out of the tool-bag, removing the pump . . . something. Of course, it may be nothing to do with a bicycle—I don't know. Perhaps he's putting his trousers in a press. Whatever it is, I never know he's there. He is invisible and soundless until . . . just as I am fully concentrated with clock-beating intensity on hasp or bolt or latch or double-handed thrust, just as my world is packed like a blacked-in O with the pulsing co-ordination of brain, mind and sinew . . .

"NICE DAY!"

The first time it happened I was in mid-spring. Even in flight it spun me off course. I overshot, split my coat sleeve on Grounger's door-handle, clawed at nothing and crashed on to a heap of old tins and sodden oil-rags—from where I presently watched him, a short figure carrying a tiny attaché-case, the clasp supplemented by a stubby, extended index finger, saunter unhurriedly down the lane, turn, and disappear from view. That morning the door wobbled shut four times against my spare wheel, and I got a bucket of water down the neck each time. I caught the eight thirty-six, and was still shaking at East Croydon.

The next day I was a bag of nerves, and trapped my finger under the wooden latch, a thing that had never happened before. I fumbled the bent nail twice. But no voice spoke. It was not until (I think) the Thursday . . . when I had mastered my fears and dropped a shutter on the memory . . .

"NICE DAY!"

It is hard to know what to do about it. It would be hard to explain to the Man. It is hard enough to explain to my office, where I am known. I have tried to put up with it, because by the end of each day, at any rate, when I come coasting in again, my nerves have subsided, and I can tell myself that it is nothing, that I am not to worry about it.

That is what I told myself until this evening.

I had made the great door secure and excavated the bunged-up bolt-hole, and was trudging



"If you're not careful you'll be disillusioning him."

down the lane with the quiet confidence of a man who knows that he has a full minute to get to his newly-brewed, waiting, well-timed tea, when . . .

"BEEN A NICE DAY!"

It was the Man. In the shadows. He has altered his routine. He is going to be there at night too. Sometimes.

Picking up the muddied contents of my brief-case and stuffing them back with a tremulous hand, I knew that I must leave my garage. I

have been happy in it, really, and I shall be sorry to go. But I must. Because of the Man in it.

J. B. BOOTHROYD

Germ Warfare Breaks Out

"Towels, liquid soap containers, and even door bolts have been stolen from the out-patients' department of Kirkcaldy General Hospital.

Provost W. Slater, Buckhaven, chairman, said that special measures were being taken at the hospital to try to catch the culprits."—*Scottish paper*.



AND ONE RED ROSE, AN ANCIENT RENT

"... WHEREAS the King's most excellent Majestie now is and standeth seized in his demeasne, as of fee, as in right of his crown of England, Scotland, France and Ireland . . ."

Studying an old document
(late the hour and low the fire—
but one must be accurate!),
poring over details drier—
than dust such deeds accumulate—
checking, pondering, computing
acreages, rose nobles, scots,
in involved Law-English rooting
to untie the meaning's knots—
sudden as the last scarlet flame
when a near-dead coal falls, came
from the stirred-up dust a scent:
"Six pounds, nine shillings, five pence half-penny—
And one red rose, an ancient rent."





Save to imagination, viewless,
save to startled fancy, hueless
the red rose dropped into my lap:
To whom, and when first tendered? Clueless
in vain I searched the document:

Articles of An Agreement
between our sovereign Lord the King's
most excellent Majestie . . . indentured . . .
upon the Four and Twentieth day . . .
all the rest a tangled welter
of mortgage-held material things,
manors, forest, farms and acres
of arable and pasture, lent,
sold, bartered, given, re-sold—long spent
lust and enjoyment of possessions,
cares of gains in cent-per-cent
still exhaled from all that dust
a graciousness Time cannot rust:
"And one red rose, an ancient rent."

From my dust, when I am dead
as quit-rent for my tenement
of this life, God grant there bloom
some day from my forgotten tomb
a vaguely recollected scent,
a memory of a line I noted
in a dust-crumbling deed, and quoted:
"And one red rose, an ancient rent."

R. C. SCRIVEN



L. H. Shepard



THERE is still time, I hope, before this eventful year runs out on us, for yet another sentimental journey back to dear old 1851. We know as much about the summer of the Great Exhibition as any period in history—the information lies knee-deep in the archives, in the official catalogues, *Hansard*, the Reports of the Commissioners for the Exhibition and in our centenary outcrop of enlightened commentaries—but the recorded social history of 1851 seems to end with startling abruptness on Saturday, October 11, when the Crystal Palace echoed with a mighty "God Save the Queen" and closed its doors.

There was no General Election in 1851 to fill in the awkward gap between the Exhibition and Christmas: the people had ten long leisurely weeks in which to prepare for the festive season, to fatten their pigs and geese, select their presents, rehearse their carols and pantomimes and to get home from outposts of Empire.

The apparatus and trappings of Christmas a hundred years ago were not vastly different from those of to-day: there were decorations, Christmas trees, yule logs, turkeys, plum puddings, crackers, mince pies, pork pies, cakes, bells and the rest . . . but very few Christmas cards. It was not until the 'eighties that these pictorial and beribboned messages of peace, goodwill and wassail became really fashionable, and not before they had survived a nation-wide newspaper campaign aimed at "thin new and senseless extravagance." In the twelve months of 1851 the average number

of letters delivered by the Post Office to each person was less than twenty (it is now about one hundred and sixty), so there was then no dramatic last-minute rush at Mount Pleasant, no Christmas Eve panic at the receipt of an unexpected card from an office colleague or the secretary of the local tennis club. And even if the Christmas card habit had been in vogue it could have affected only about fifty per cent of the community, for at that time nearly half the adult population of eleven millions was illiterate.

SMART'S WRITING INSTITUTION

5 Piccadilly (between the Haymarket and Regent Circus) removed from New Street, Covent Garden. Open from 10 till 9 daily. Persons of all ages received (privately) and taught at any time suiting their own convenience. Lessons one hour each. No classes; no extra. Improvement guaranteed in eight to twelve easy lessons. Separate rooms for Ladies, to which department (if preferred) Mrs. Smart will attend. For terms, etc., apply to Mr. Smart as above.

In 1851 the circulation of *The Times* was 38,000: that of the *Daily News* was 5,000, and that of *Punch* about 4,000. The market for thunderous prose and "perishing puns" was still strictly limited.

Christmas trees had been introduced only a few years earlier by Prince Albert, and with their candles and ornamental finery had soon won

their way into Victorian hearts. It would be fairer, perhaps, to say that the trees were re-introduced by the Prince Consort, for they had been widely used in England for many centuries before the Puritans purged Christmas of its exuberance and frivolity. Indeed, it was an English missionary, Boniface, who introduced the Christmas tree to Germany way back in the eighth century. It left us as an oak and came back a fir.

What presents were heaped about the Christmas trees of 1851? Let us study the advertisement columns for December—

"A New Christmas Present for Children—The American Velocipede designed for the use of children above three years of age . . ."

"Chinese Presents for Christmas—fans, card cases, etc., . . . also the splendid stock from the Great Exhibition."

"Christmas Presents—Phantasmagoria. A large stock of magic and phantasmagoric lanterns, with an immense variety of slides, including comic . . . dissolving views and other subjects."

There is no mention so far of prices. But wait—

"Epernay Champagnes by Electric Telegraph, ordered and sent direct by railway, from the Champagne vineyards, 4s. per dozen quart . . . now supplied in every club in London except three; also to 38 regiments."

"Pure Ports, vintage 1844 and 1847, 3s. and 3s. per dozen . . ."

"Eureka Shirts, 40s. the half doz. . . ."

"Cigars Sent Free . . . The celebrated 'Favourite' Havannah, 1s. 6d. per lb. . . . Finest Old Cubas, 10s. per lb. . . ."

"One Thousand Chinese Spiders, just landed from Canton, in excellent condition, and unusually lively, price 6d. each, at Hewett's Large Chinese Warehouse, 18 Fenchurch Street, City."





There are few references to foods and non-alcoholic drinks. Tea, best Souchong, was 4s. 4d. per lb., best Mocha coffee 1s. 4d. per lb.; and a box of Banbury cakes cost five shillings ("36,000 supplied to the Great Exhibition"), but the papers make little or no mention of nuts, turkeys, pork pie, sweetmeats, cakes, biscuits or chocolate: the advertisements deal almost exclusively with sauces, relishes, cough jujube lozenges, respiratory organ and chest protectors ("... completely supersede the Old Metallic Respirator, and form the best Neck Wrapper extant"), Macassar oil, pomades, waterproofs ("Edmiston's Pocket Siphonia Dreadnought"), bronzes, caskets, candelabra, candlesticks, blotting books, tea caddies, watch stands, paper weights, letter clips and gold, ruby and diamond pens. Oh yes, and jewellery—

"For Christmas Presents—A fine assortment of Cast-iron Jewellery . . ."

It is difficult to compare the lot of the ordinary family of 1851 with that of Mr. and Mrs. Sensitive Index 1951, but we know that average retail prices are now more than three times as high as they were then, and that average wages are now about fourteen times as high. In 1851 the normal working week was sixty hours, for which the wage-earner was paid ten shillings: to-day he does a forty-five hour week for about seven pounds. On the other hand the standard rate of income tax was then sevenpence in the pound, whereas to-day, or just after Christmas . . . but I needn't remind you of that.

Then, as now, books were among

the safest of presents: they were easy to select (the list of titles was very short), they were easily packed and posted, and they implied a flattering degree of literacy in the recipient. But they were deucedly expensive. Thackeray's *Vanity Fair* was selling at a guinea, and *Pendennis* at twenty-six shillings; Dickens' *Oliver Twist* was eleven shillings, and *Dombey and Son* a pound; "The Life and Death of Little Red Riding Hood, a tragedy, adapted from the German of Ludwig Tieck," cost three and sixpence; Wilkie Collins' latest work, *Mr. Wray's Cash-box*, was going for five shillings; Mark Lemon's *Prose and Verse* cost five shillings, and Darwin's *Voyage of a Naturalist* two and sixpence. *Punch* then cost threepence ("stamped 4d"), *The Times* fivepence, and *Household Words* two pence.

But the best reading of the day, undoubtedly, was the voluminous dispatches from *The Times* correspondents in Paris, where Louis Napoleon was making hay of the French constitution and rousing the wrath of Queen Victoria, Lord John Russell (the Prime Minister) and everyone else except Lord Palmerston and his followers. But more of this next time: I want to wind up this instalment with a little surprise. I want you to know that throughout the month of December, 1851, the editorial columns of *The Times* and *Punch* contained virtually no reference to Christmas.

And *The Times*, I may add, was published as usual on December 24, 25 and 26. Louis Napoleon had the news to himself.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



"This one's more expensive, of course—it used to have a Van Gogh in it."

THE INWARD EYE

I SIT down and dial TRU. Bree-bree, it says, very loud to-night. Not that it would sound like that to the exchange, of course. I've seen enough films to have a very good idea of a telephone exchange, the rows of head-phoned heads, the hands fluttering over the pegs, the honeyed voices murmuring down their tiny fog-horns, the—

There now, there he is. A nice kind voice, the one they all have. I can see him as clearly as if he were a wireless announcer. I think he's in his shirt-sleeves, which seems funny this weather. He hasn't got a name. I haven't either, to him. That's ridiculous. I shall call him Mr. Smith; though what I shall *call* him will be Exchange, and a very good name too when you realize that he doesn't wear head-phones or speak into any kind of instrument. He gets his voice across by having been so long in the telephone world that he works like a telephone himself.

I shouldn't have time to be thinking all this about Mr. Smith if he wasn't hunting for my West Country

townlet in his book, a buff pamphlet on a string. He printed my version incredulously on the back of an old envelope, changing the C to a messy T and scribbling the final "bridge" in a rush of comprehension, and, I must say, receiving my evidence of *bona fides*—the news that you go through Yeovil—with the mildest possible interest. Won't he be surprised? Mr. Smith! I haven't, it is! Why, my mother *lives* there! That's roused him, he's propped the book against a jam-jar of dead marigolds, and as he runs his finger rather crossly down the page I see that he's grown an eye-shade. Oh, Mr. Smith, you shouldn't have bothered. Or perhaps it's that light. It's only fifteen watts, but bang overhead, with one of those Chinese-hat shades, green on top. I've found it, Caller. And sooty underneath. Mind that tea-cup. I never saw such a clutter, and the ash-trays! It's one thing to chuck the stuff off an ash-tray, it's another to—

Mr. Smith says that the lines are engaged. No, wait a minute, will I hold on? Yes, indeed. I suppose

the engaged lines are the ones with a plug both ends? There are very few of these; in fact there weren't any until he drew my attention to them. The others, hundreds of them, trail down to the floor, giving the effect of seaweed or whiskers. The switchboard, size 1a, I should say they picked up cheap. It has a splintery back with chalk squiggles, and one push would topple it off its trestle table. But behind Mr. Smith there's a nice office writing-desk covered with newspapers and green tomatoes, and at the end of this long dim room I can just make out a huge marble mantelpiece with no fire. If Mr. Smith could see over the switchboard he'd find another table, empty but for a clamped-on pencil-sharpener—or is it a mincing-machine?—and he could spread himself out a bit. It isn't as if there were any other people in the room. You get the impression that there were once, but they left because of the light. The effect of this light and of the dark green walls is gloom indescribable, and as your eyes become conditioned and you pick out tea-cup after tea-cup you realize how it has got into Mr. Smith's soul.

But the soul is a wonderful thing. Here is Mr. Smith hailing Shaftesbury, outpost of the world beyond the shadows, and his voice holds the authority and the challenge of a spirit unquenchable and sure of its facts. What's more, Shaftesbury heard him, and to seal his triumph Mr. Smith took one of the little pegs out of the switchboard and put it back with a flourish that knocked the marigolds over, but before he could mop them up with his directory the room disappeared into the night and he found himself sitting on a map.

I know this map well, but you wouldn't—not this particular one. It's just the South of England from about the narrow bit to the coastline (which is quite good in places), and from east to west there's a thick black line starting at my hall table and ending on the window-sill in Dorset, and on this line are marked Shaftesbury, Yeovil, Sherborne, Andover Junction, Salisbury Cathedral, Woking and, as I was saying, Mr. Smith. He lurks at the right-hand edge, keeping an eye on Shaftesbury and waiting his chance; and no more than ten seconds later—for it seems that you don't go through Yeovil any more—here it is, the familiar burr-burr. Wham! He's landed plumb on the window-sill. This is his big moment. Get them both together, you can almost hear him muttering, and no talking until I say so. One hand lifted in restraint, the other outstretched to grab a collar, and he has made it. The climax is quietly dramatic. A few words of introduction, the valedictory "Go ahead, Caller!" and Mr. Smith cuts the tape and bows himself out.

I like to think of him back at the switchboard, filling the kettle and sitting down with his envelope and a pencil and a stopwatch. But I ask you; ten minutes later, if I rang him to find out what all that cost, he'd be acting as if he was a different Mr. Smith altogether and had never heard of me in his life.

ANDE

BACK ROOM JOYS

Showing Emotion

IT's by no means the popular notion,
But we do like showing emotion . . .
Our little tear-sheddings
At weddings;
The lump in the throat, surprising, the mist in the eyes
When the audience rise
And "Abide With Me" swells out twenty thousand
strong.
We mustn't indulge it—we've always been taught
that's wrong—
But it's nice being certain we're basically human and
weak,
That we've got something there to control.
We can't speak;
If we could, it's the last thing we'd mention,
And if it draws anybody's attention
It's absolute death, far, far worse than noticing them.
But when the lights dim, and the drums start that
rising roll,
We like for a second or two, not often, not much,
Feeling the common touch—
And then putting on once again our unshakeable
phlegm.

JUSTIN RICHARDSON





[Relative Values]

Crestwell—MR RICHARD LEECH ; Miranda Frayle—MISS JUDY CAMPBELL
Mrs. Moxon—MISS ANGELA BADDELEY ; Felicity—MISS GLADYS COOPER

AT THE PLAY

Relative Values (SAVOY)—*Mary Had a Little*— (STRAND)



IF Mr. NOËL COWARD has lately seemed like a fine precision tool that has lost the keenness of its cutting-edge, it is all the more reason to rejoice when he brings out a comedy with as much natural sparkle in it as *Relative Values*. This has not the symmetry of the best of his earlier comedies, for there are no foothills in the third act high enough to mask its inevitable goal, but it has several notably funny situations and a smooth stream of good dialogue.

The play is a demonstration of the absurdity of the idea that we are all equal, and also of the even greater absurdity of the idea that we should all wish to be; and it gains force from the fact that its chief recusant comes from the kitchen. It is about a large country house riven by the return of its son, the present earl, with a venomous film-star from Hollywood whom he proposes to marry. His mother, the very nicest of dowagers, adored by everybody, has learned to take such things in her stride; but not so her personal maid, who is the film-star's long-forgotten sister. To soothe her agony and prevent her going she

is promoted to be a guest, and in one of the neatest scenes Mr. COWARD has written we see her reaching boiling-point while her unsuspecting sister describes the fabulous squalls of their childhood. The explosion is atomic. It blasts an open track to the final curtain, and to the dumb alcoholic who has pursued the film-star from America falls the duty of carrying away the debris. The weak spot in the story is that the maid could much more easily have been sent off for a holiday during the crisis period, but how much we should have missed! The first act is built up almost with the care of a Pinero. If for once Mr. COWARD had wished to go more deeply into a social problem he had the foundations ready. As it is he skims over his subject, but he does so with wit and with considerably more sympathy than he commonly allows himself.

There are two unforgettable good performances. Miss GLADYS COOPER, charming in the truest sense of that battered word, plays the dowager with a dazzling mastery of the art of comedy. Her timing is a miracle; she loses nothing of the domestic ironies of our brave new

world. And Miss ANGELA BADDELEY is wonderful as the grief-stricken and indignant maid whose rugged independence makes a stout answer to the levellers who would force us all into the same dull mould. Mr. COWARD has put a great deal of understanding into this part. The rest are easier. Miss JUDY CAMPBELL lays on a moron's vulgarity amusingly, and I liked Mr. RICHARD LEECH's Johnsonian butler, relied on by his mistress for Olympian wisdom, and Mr. HUGH McDERMOTT's winning simpleton from California.

It took three authors to concoct the surpassing inanity of *Mary Had a Little*—. Had they faced the audience on the first night the booing with which this witless, tasteless and altogether wretched little piece was met would have been heartily justified. That it succeeded in America is beyond comprehension. Any panel of citizens from a passing bus could have told those who put it on here that they were wasting time and money. The thought that grown-up persons went to all the trouble of importing such unpleasant shoddy is infinitely depressing; and it seems amazing that at no stage in its long journey can there have been anyone with enough sense to put his foot down.

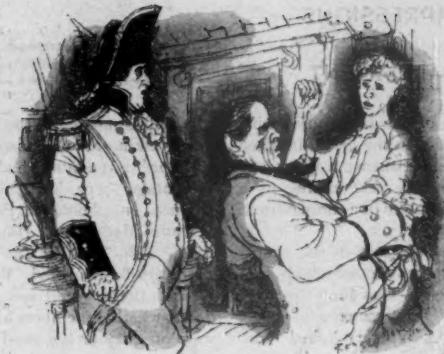
Recommended

Peter Ustinov's *The Moment of Truth* (Adelphi) goes downhill after a fine start, but is worth seeing. In *Summer and Smoke* (Lyric, Hammersmith) Tennessee Williams says more than usual. Don't forget *The Winter's Tale* (Phoenix).

ERIC KEOWN



[Mary Had a Little]
Mary White—MISS PATRICIA PLUNKETT



AT THE OPERA

Billy Budd (COVENT GARDEN)

BENJAMIN BRITTEN's new opera *Billy Budd*, after a strangely disappointing first act, goes on from strength to strength and achieves a triumphant success. The libretto by E. M. FORSTER and ERIC CROZIER is first-rate, and does ample justice to a highly dramatic plot based on Herman Melville's famous tale of the French wars in 1797.

Billy Budd is a merchant seaman impressed for service on board a man-of-war, the *Indomitable*, commanded by Captain *Vere*. He is a foundling with no home, but he loves his sailor's life, is brave, loyal and honest, and is ready to die for his captain and shipmates if need be. He is indeed a little too good to be true, and it is a great tribute to the skill of librettists and composer that he does not appear a prig. THEODOR UPPMAN, a young Swedish-American singer with a baritone voice of warm vibrant quality, playing his first important part in opera, succeeds in bringing him convincingly to life.

The villain of the story is *Claggart*, the Master-at-Arms (FREDERICK DALBERG), who dislikes the radiant *Billy* and accuses him of mutiny to get rid of him. *Billy*, who stammers, cannot reply to the accusation in words; instead he knocks *Claggart* down with a blow of his fist and kills him. The prototype of *Claggart* is, of course,

Scarpia, and the soliloquies of this brace of operatic villains, who both maintain themselves by sheer terror, form an interesting comparison. *Scarpia*'s soliloquy in *Tosca*, a lurid recital of his tastes and feelings, transforms him into a monster of frightful proportions; whereas *Claggart*, in soliloquizing, is a little too anxious to explain the depravity of his own character. When anyone explains himself he risks explaining himself away—and this applies particularly to villains. Where *Scarpia* grows in horror through self-revelation, *Claggart* from self-explanation dwindles noticeably.

Among the many merits of *Billy Budd* is the fact that it provides the first really sympathetic rôle for BRITTEN's distinguished interpreter PETER PEARS. *Peter Grimes* cannot be called agreeable, and the humour of *Albert Herring* borders on stark tragedy; but "*Starry*" *Vere* is an intensely human figure, an upright and honourable man faced with a terrible choice between the claims of duty and those of humanity. Having made the choice he is consumed with remorse for the rest of his days. Mr. PEARS has responded to the demands of this character by developing what seems to be an entirely new voice. The rather strained, white vocal tone that we have hitherto associated with him has gone; in its place there is a voice

of warm, even quality with an expressive *legato*. This new voice, with his dignified acting and great musical intelligence, makes his performance as "*Starry*" *Vere* a memorable one.

The failure of the first act—and on the first night there is no doubt it was a failure—remains inexplicable. It is clearly meant to focus attention on the misery, discontent and brutal discipline which caused the mutiny at the Nore, to which frequent allusion is made in the opera. The fine double chorus of sailors hollering on decks—"Heave, oh!—heave"—somehow does not achieve the effect which, on paper, looks a certainty. There is no doubt, however, that the climax of the opera is moving and impressive in the extreme. The drum-head court-martial which condemns *Billy* to death for striking and killing a superior officer; "*Starry*" *Vere*'s anguish of mind at having to sacrifice what he recognizes as "beauty, handsomeness, goodness" in order to uphold the law; *Billy*'s farewell to life—the most deeply-moving piece of music ever to come from BRITTEN's pen; the last scene depicting the terrifying ceremonial with which society rids itself of those who have infringed its laws; and *Billy* calling down a blessing on the head of "*Starry*" *Vere* before walking away under guard to be hanged from the yard-arm; it is all superb.

The producer and designer do not seem to have quite decided between realism and expressionism in presentation. A work such as *Billy Budd* is bound, however, to grow and develop in performance. First nights never represent last thoughts.

D. C. B.

3 3

INFLATIONARY PROVERBS

OLD money proverbs I'd re-pon,
And show to modern eyes
How thirty-shilling-foolish men
Are penny-halfpenny-wise:

And how, since money misbehaved,
The strange result's obtained
That every penny-halfpenny saved
May mean a penny gained.



IMPRESSIONS OF PARLIAMENT

Monday, December 3

There is no doubt about it—
their Lordships do know how to
relax when they
choose to do so.
House of Lords: H.G. Inspected
House of Commons: The splendour of
Ministers Inspected

the Gilded

Chamber does not seem in the
least incongruous, however whimsy
the oratory becomes, or however
fanciful the flights of fancy.

To-day, for instance, Lord JOWITT, for so long Lord Chancellor (whose elevation to an earldom was the subject of many congratulations), had a few very "human" comments to make on the Home Guard and their alleged promiscuity to liquid refreshment. If, incidentally, some of those who will be responsible in due time for recruiting for the H.G. did not seem to relish greatly the jokes at the expense of that much-leg-pulled body, the fun was good-humoured, though not very original.

The whole debate turned on the question when a Home Guard was on duty, within the meaning of the Act—for it makes a lot of difference. On duty the H.G. is under military law; off duty, under the blander civil law. And ne'er (their Opposition Lordships seemed determined) the twain should meet. Lord SALISBURY said the Government did not propose to alter the Bill in any drastic way, so the H.G. of the future will, as did his predecessors in wartime, live a double life, in the legal sense, sometimes under the civil law, sometimes under King's Regs and the Army Act.

Meanwhile, however, Lord JOWITT, speaking as a Law Lord, wanted answers to a few questions, prefacing them with the comment that the whole plan seemed like Dr. Johnson's cold mutton, "ill-fed, ill-killed, ill-kept and ill-dressed"—the last possibly a reference to the fact that H.G.s are to have only steel helmet and brassard as uniform.

He displayed a certain lack of knowledge of the last-war activities of the Home Guard, and drew snorts from noble Lords around him with

his picture of the H.G. adjourning automatically to the local inn when it rained, substituting a quick one for a password, and aiming at a dartboard in place of a more normal military target.

Yes, but suppose in the course of the darts game somebody hit somebody else—was that "*conduct prejudicial*," or "*common assault*," or what? A bit far-fetched, was Lord SALISBURY's comment—and, anyway, this half-and-half system worked in the war, so why not now? Lord JOWITT retorted that he did not like H.G. being intermittently under military law. But that's the way it is to be.



Impressions of Parliamentarians

Sir H. G. Williams (Croydon, E.)

General Lord BRIDGEMAN, who was the Home Guard, as its Director-General, raised a big cheer when he said that men would willingly join if they felt the need to be there—but that they would certainly not do so if they judged that body to be merely a "Blimp's Benefit," a politicians' plaything, or easy money for humorous artists.

The Commons were talking mainly about the Bill authorizing the appointment of a few new Ministers, but, before they went home, they touched on shipping and many another subject.

Tuesday, December 4

While their Lordships pursued the subject of the Home Guard, and Lord JOWITT withdrew (al-House of Lords: H.G. Again House of Commons: Housing though "entirely unsatisfied") his proposal that no H.G. should be regarded as being under military

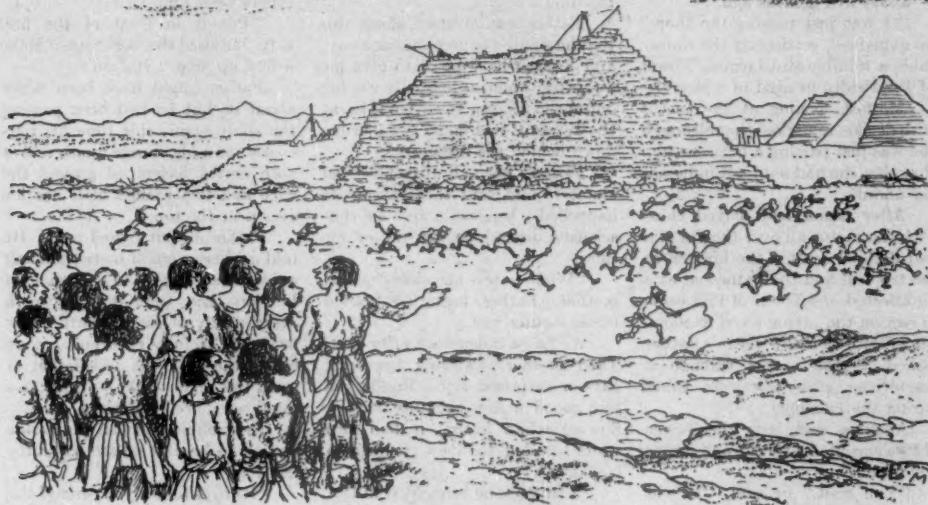
law unless mustered, the Commons were talking about housing.

Lord SALISBURY had one big advantage over his Cabinet colleagues in Another Place, Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN, Housing Minister, and Mr. JAMES STUART, Secretary for Scotland. When Lord S. said there would never be any doubt whether members of the H.G. were on duty or not (and therefore subject or not to military law) this seemed to be accepted by the House. But when the Ministers in the Commons declared their policy of encouraging more private building and of selling council houses where appropriate, there were yells of derision from the Opposition benches.

Indeed, the whole debate was marked (marred is not too strong a word) by the "class prejudice" of which Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN complained. Yes, Mr. BEVAN really did accuse the Government of showing class prejudice by suggesting that more houses be built for sale. He held that the houses—limited to a maximum of 1,500 square feet in area—would be snapped up by "rich spivs," who, it would seem, live exclusively in the South of England and are unknown in the more heavily industrialized areas.

When Government supporters murmured "Vermin" Mr. BEVAN ignored the comment. His case was that there is not enough manpower, or enough raw materials, in the country to make possible the arms drive and the housing drive at one and the same time. Having thus neatly introduced both his pet subjects ("for the price of one," as a commentator put it) Mr. B. contented himself with the round declaration that the whole thing, so far as the Government was concerned, was "class prejudice" and, as such, of course, anathema to him.

Mr. MACMILLAN seemed too taken aback to reply—except to the effect that almost every phrase and ruling in the circular he had sent to



"It looks as if there's been a breakdown in our negotiations with the management."

local housing authorities had been "plagiarized" from Mr. BEVAN's own Ministerial circulars when he headed the Ministry of Health. There followed a fascinatingly complicated argument on these lines: "What do you mean by so-and-so?" "I mean the same as you meant!" "Then what did I mean?" "I don't know!" "Then how do you know what you mean—if you don't know what I meant?"

The House gave up about half-way through, but the two contestants doggedly saw it through to the end. And then the debate became highly technical for hours, enlivened by an acid civil war on the Labour benches between those who were able to make their speeches (and who, in the view of the others, spoke at too great length) and those who were unable to make speeches. Impatient thumpings on the backs of the seats and groans of bravely borne suffering punctuated many of the Opposition speeches, and the speakers were unable to

make any capital from it, since the disapproving noises came from their own Party colleagues.

The debate was wound up by Mr. JAMES STUART, with a refreshingly novel type of Parliamentary oratory, which first startled, then delighted the House. Whereas most Ministers, interrupted, tend to get snappy and to retort hotly, Mr. STUART treated the whole thing with gentle patience and (very occasionally) even gentler irony and repartee. When, for instance, he was outlining the Government's plans, someone on the other side shouted "Too late!" And, without raising his voice in the slightest, Mr. STUART drawled "We have to catch up on the last six years, y'know!"

That got a cheer, and interjections were rare afterwards. When he had to refer something to another Minister Mr. STUART added considerably to his personal popularity and the good temper of the House by commenting, in an aside, "I'm passing the buck!"

The Opposition had moved a critical motion complaining that the Government's housing policy was all wrong, to which the Government moved an amendment contending that it was all right. The motion was defeated, the amendment carried. So that was that.

Wednesday, December 5

Mr. CHURCHILL gave a practical and diverting demonstration of the futility of setting House of Commons: No Catch the snare in the sight of the bird—especially when it is so wily a bird as the Right Honourable Gentleman. There was an innocent-looking question about self-government for Colonies, and Mr. C. said he did not want to make any declaration on the subject then. The next ten minutes or so were spent in trying, by devious means, to get him to say something. But, although the replies were as various as the queries and the questioners, the Prime Minister won handsomely—he did not make a declaration.

JUST PASSING THE SHOP

FATHER'S cactus phase started about five months ago.

"I was just passing the shop," he explained, setting on the dinner table a thimble-size Leaning Tower of Pisa badly in need of a shave.

Mother, looking at the cactus with dislike, remarked that although she was just passing a harness shop that day she had not let it influence her unduly.

After father had played chess with the cactus all over the flat and had decided against the kitchen as too tropical and the bathroom as a bit affected, the Tower of Pisa came to rest on the sitting-room window-sill beside mother's fern. Father looked at the cactus through a magnifying glass thirty-six times during the evening.

About a week later the Tower of Pisa sprouted a turret, and father was proud.

"You wait," he said. "It will fall off by itself. It knows the exact moment."

The exact moment came when mother was dusting, but father was unsuspecting and delighted. As he was just passing the shop next day he bought a little pot for the turret; and a new cactus, which appeared to be a miniature pair of trembling pink rubber boots.

Fate now began to stalk father's hobby; the turret seemed to be getting smaller and more introspective every day; and we didn't know how to face father when the cat got up on the window-sill and

ate most of the rubber boots one morning.

Father was so upset about this that he wanted to give the cat away; and I think he wanted to give me away too when, animatedly waving out of the window to a friend, I sent the Tower of Pisa on its last journey down behind the radiator.

Father got all psychological about it and said these accidents happened because we subconsciously desired to get rid of his cacti.

"What—even the cat?" asked mother. Father, losing his head a little, shouted yes.

We had a quiet week after that. Then mother, watering her fern, gave a surprised cry. Beside the fern stood a new creature with a flowing white beard; it had two white-bearded toddlers clinging to its skirts.

"I suppose he brought it in last night," said mother, adding "Ugh!"

The workman from downstairs must have had subconscious desires too. He came in to mend our radiator, and then, while enjoying an informal cup of tea and telling us about the Navy, suddenly lost his balance and knocked his tea all over the toddlers and their parent, staining the beards brown.

Mother was beside herself.

"What shall we do?" she wailed, running to and fro with the cactus, while the workman stared.

"Wash it under the tap," I suggested mistakenly. One of the

beards came off in our hands; the others went limp.

"Put it in front of the fire, lady," advised the workman. "Make it fluff up, like." It didn't.

Father might have been worse about it, but he had been passing the shop again; this time his purchase was a big orange tennis racket with curled feelers all around the edge and two wicked little shark's eyes near the top.

Father all but talked to it. He told us there weren't more than half a dozen cacti like it in the whole of London, and that it was worth every penny of—well, worth every penny. Carefully enthroning it on top of the radio, he added that at least this one would be safe; we could see it well enough.

The trouble was that the cactus seemed to be able to see us pretty well too.

"Its eyes follow you around the room," whispered mother, like someone in a Victorian novel. She stopped dusting the radio altogether.

I was in the kitchen when it happened. One minute I could hear a burst of radio, and the next minute there was a crash.

Pointing to the shattered tennis racket, the hysterical excuse mother offered was that the cactus had suddenly reached out and felt her sleeve while she was tuning in to *Woman's Hour*.

We might as well have tried to repair a broken egg. We laid the pieces, shark's eyes and all, on a meat dish, and waited for six o'clock and father.

When we heard his key in the lock mother turned pale, but seized the dish and went to meet him.

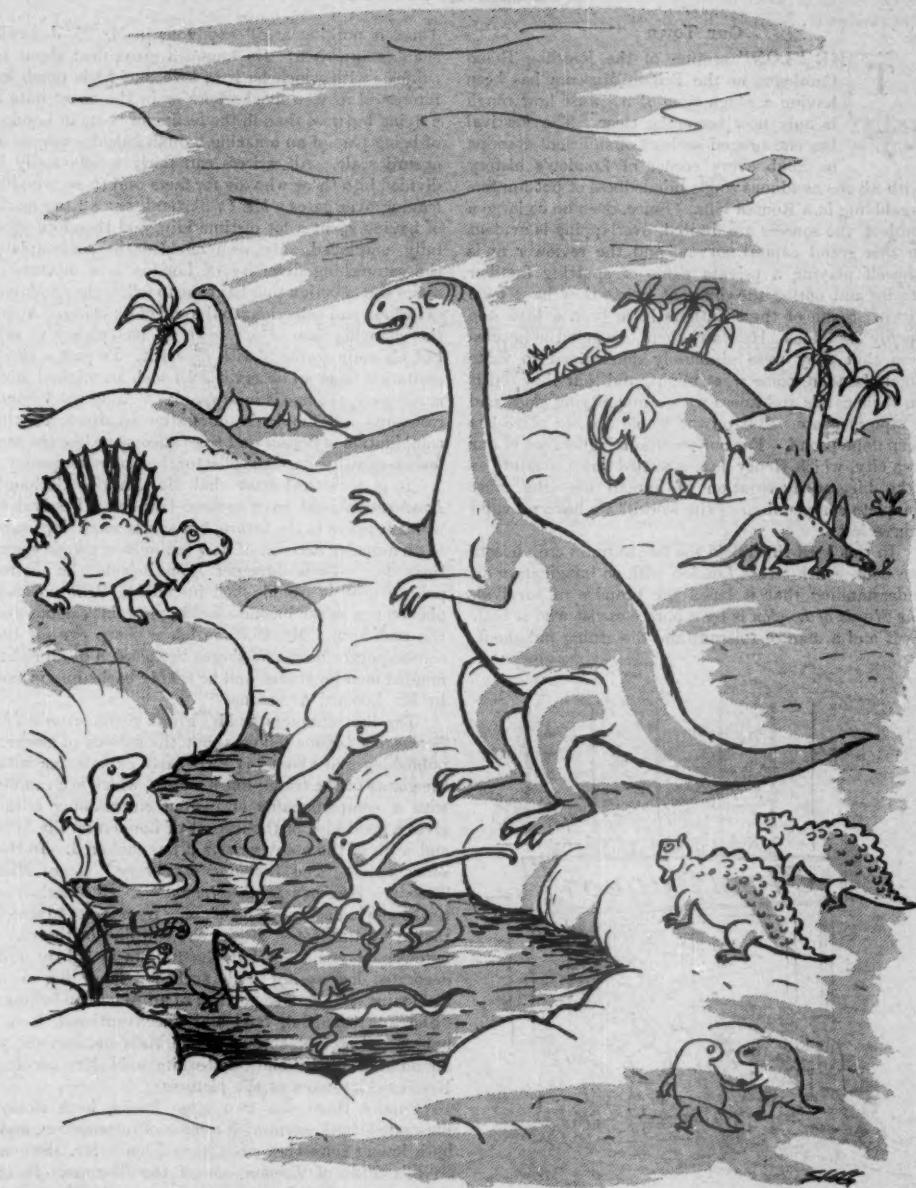
"I coo—coo—couldn't help it," she said tremulously.

With a careless, good-natured chuckle of "It does look a bit sick, doesn't it?" father turned his back on the wreck and ceremoniously produced a box, which he set on the table and unveiled.

"There aren't more than half a dozen tropical fish like this in the whole of London," he said impressively. "Wasn't it lucky—I was just passing the shop."



"More fool you. You might have known I'd be late."



"Very well then, hands up all those who propose to become birds."

BOOKING OFFICE

Our Town

THE "LON" section of the Reading Room Catalogue at the British Museum has been having a rough time of it. Just how rough is only now becoming clear. The Festival has encouraged authors of sufficient stamina to comb every corner of London's history with all the assiduous single-mindedness of pot-hunters scrabbling in a Roman villa. Since, even on so large a subject, the sources are limited, overlapping is evident in this grand capital survey, and the reviewer finds himself playing a private game of spotting familiar stories and noting the different twists they have been given. Some of these authors have been a little too openly assiduous. Here and there one gets the impression that they were absolutely determined to write about London, come what might, and that they did it on their hands and knees with a magnifying glass and a tape measure. But on the whole the old place has been done proud. For our traditional ignorance of our own city, which Henry James settled down to study as "the biggest aggregation of human life—the most complete compendium of the world," we have no valid excuse left.

In this hard-tilled field the late autumn crop boasts one book which treats London with so imaginative an understanding that it bears the promise of survival. *The Moods of London* is by a born essayist who is both a wit and a man of tolerant and discerning judgment.

There is nothing at all assiduous in Mr. R. J. Cruikshank's approach. He knows a great deal about his subject, with which he is in love, but he is much less interested in who lived where or in the exact date of a flying buttress than in the feeling of being in London, of being part of an amazing human kaleidoscope on an absurd scale. All writers can fairly satisfactorily be divided into those who dig for facts and those who like leaning over gates. Mr. Cruikshank has all the marks of having spent a lot of time idly, and therefore fruitfully, employed. His own mood as he contemplates the astonishing diversity of London is a mixture of satire and affection that has time to follow the pendulum of fashion and behaviour to the end of its swing. About the changing face of our town he has plenty to say, but his main traffic is with its spirit. To pick a single quotation from an observer with such an original mind is not easy, yet one is inescapable: "Amid the Puritan restraints of London's domestic architecture, this combination of houses and trees affects one like the confession of an income-tax collector that he writes poetry."

It is a tactical error that Mr. Maurice Gorham's *Londoners* should have arrived late for a Festival to which it refers in the future, but this is small detriment to an amusing account of how ten million people spend their day. To a foreigner from beyond the metropolitan area it would shed invaluable light on such phenomena as the business lunch, pin-table saloons and the rush-hour. Mr. Gorham has a sharp eye for the contemporary quirk, he shares the passion of all right-minded men for trams, and he is ably backed up in line by Mr. Edward Ardizzone.

The best chapters in Mr. Frank Swinnerton's *The Bookman's London* tell us about the growth of modern publishing and about his own early experiences with the giants of the trade; but his book, which is a ramble with a companionable and often entertaining critic, gives a good idea of the impact of London on the lives and work of the many writers it has sheltered. In the same series, "The Londoner's Library," comes Miss Theodora Benson's *London Immortals*. Her method is the somewhat scrappy one of going from street to street raking up the fattest stories she can find of the more noteworthy residents, but she follows it lightly and decorates her recital with such jewels of her own fashioning as this terse portrait of an American heiress: "She was beautiful, bold and unconventional, loyal, honest and no fool, shrewd, crude, rude and incredibly dominating." In black-and-white acid Mr. Nicolas Bentley drew most of the pictures.

Finally there are two large books, both richly illustrated, both containing a mass of information, and both longer than they need have been. Mr. Mervyn Savill's *Tide of London* covers the Thames. It is strongest on river low life, weakest on the theatrical glories of Bankside. Miss Millicent Rose's *The East End of London* deals exhaustively with a quarter which deserves more attention than we commonly give it.

ERIC KEOWN



Prince of Civil Servants

In *The Age of Wren* Mr. Ralph Dutton covers the years from the Accession of Charles II to the death of Anne—a period practically coincident with Wren's long tenure of the office of Surveyor-General. Was there ever Civil Servant of such outstanding genius, creative energy, versatility and unflagging industry? Or one so supremely happy in his opportunity, so distinguished in achievement? Mr. Dutton is under the spell of the great little man—who indeed can resist it?—and conveys to us his enthusiasm not in vague encomiums but in packed factual commentary and detailed appreciations. Nor does he neglect the craftsmen in which the age was so rich—masons, carpenters, plasterers, smiths, wood-carvers and decorative painters. The chapter on Wren's competent but overshadowed contemporaries—Pratt, Webb, May, Talman, Hooke—is particularly valuable, this ground having been less frequently covered. As a pendant to his period the author surveys the work of the Baroque School—Vanbrugh, Hawksmoor, Gibbs—in a final chapter. A scholarly piece of work, the historical background aptly sketched in. The many illustrations are admirably chosen.

J. P. T.

Microcosm of Dublin

Miss Elizabeth Bowen can pick up vibrations from both depths and surfaces. She knows the rawness of the betrayed heart and the patina that buildings, gardens, fashions acquire as they recede from us. Her new book, *The Shelbourne*, is a biography of the principal hotel in Dublin, yet from this improbable material she has woven a fabric opalescent in aspect and tough in texture. She relates architecture and Irish history and changes in amusements, evoking vice-regal balls, heavy Victorian ledgers, the gunfire of The Troubles and officers on their way to the races or to hunt. When she tries to express wonder at the hygienic mechanization behind the scenes, she is unconvincing; few writers less resemble Arnold Bennett. As in "Bowen's Court," she is at her best with something that is not quite topography and not quite history, a genre of her own. She shows a wayward delight in making a work of art from a theme that would normally be tackled by an advertising agent.

R. G. G. P.

Black Sunrise

On that April morning in 1672 when Sultan Al-Rashid was killed by a fall from his horse amidst the orange groves of Marrakesh a *Black Sunrise* rose over Morocco. After five years of civil war Al-Rashid's mulatto half-brother Mulai Ismail became Sultan and in the next fifty years united the principalities of the Maghrib into an empire that after two centuries still remains united under the nominal rule of his descendant. If his political achievement accorded with the Moslem tradition that great rulers are the sons of Negroes by an Arab father, Mulai Ismail's Arab blood revealed itself in a passion for grandiose building that made his

capital at Meknès the Moorish rival of Louis XIV's Versailles. Nevertheless Mr. Wilfrid Blunt rightly compares this sadistic Moorish tyrant not with his contemporary the "Roi Soleil" but with his Russian prototype Ivan the Terrible, who, like Mulai Ismail, understood "the genius and temper of his people." An interesting and arresting "picture of a Moorish villain."

L. F. D. M.

Oceania

The mysterious, so far incalculable, rhythm of the ocean's encroachment upon and retreat from lands and continents—a process which, like "The Great Snowfall" of sediment into the sea, has been continuous since earth's formation—is one of the most fascinating of the many deeply interesting subjects dealt with by Miss Rachel L. Carson in *The Sea Around Us*. Miss Carson discourses clearly and with close-packed factual detail upon all things maritime. The formation of ocean beds, the shape and contours of the earth's submarine lands, so often and so paradoxically dry-as-dust items of our geography lessons, she contrives to make absorbingly interesting; especially so in her description of man's many ingenious methods of probing and analysing oceans' depths (not silent at any depth yet plumbed). In short there is no question the layman at any rate can ask about the sea which Miss Carson is unable to answer, save only at what point its present encroachment on the North American continent will halt, and when. She seems equally omniscient about



"Is it all right to drink whisky
during as well as before and after?"

life in the sea. "For all at last return to the sea—to Oceania, the ocean-river, like the ever-flowing stream of time, the beginning and the end." R. C. S.

Opinions and Encounters

Mr. Eden Phillpotts has a poor opinion of people who "commit" autobiographies and has ransacked sixty-five years of diaries to discover vestiges of men more distinguished, as he thinks, than himself. His view of them and their age, and of us and ours, is vividly recorded *From the Angle of 88*. Here you will find only so much of author, dramatist and gardener as will account for friendships with people like Irving, Shaw, Bennett, Galsworthy, Maurice Hewlett and Reginald Farrer. It is characteristic, for instance, that although Farrer "came to see my plants" the plants are not described—while Hewlett's Wiltshire vineyard is. Among what the author calls his "salients" Mr. Punch stands up conspicuously. Mr. Phillpotts has distrusted democracy since he had the top hat which it was his duty to wear as a needy young clerk knocked off and trodden on by an egalitarian mob. Its recent activities have not caused him to reconsider his attitude.

H. P. E.

Beastly to the Beast

In *The Great Beast* Mr. John Symonds has written a detailed and authentic biography of Aleister Crowley, poet, poseur, erotomaniac and mystic, compiled largely from Crowley's own diaries and those of his followers, and incomplete only where the obvious legal difficulties of writing about the Beast's surviving disciples compel discretion. It is easy to shudder, easier to laugh, at



Crowley, but neither attitude can quite deal with a personality that could draw into its orbit men of the calibre of J. W. N. Sullivan and General J. F. C. Fuller. Mr. Symonds has chosen mockery as his standpoint, descending from it sometimes to fatuity and occasionally to spite. Yet for all the scoffing, Crowley's life emerges as, in its perverse way, a work of art, consciously created on a predetermined pattern with considerable success; and even those of whom it is asking too much to demand admiration for such a life may still derive from it wonder, amusement, and possibly a moral.

B. A. Y.

The Man with the Monocle Again

The drawing shows a man sitting by a lake on which two swans are swimming, and the legend reads—"Advertising Copy Writer (reflectively): 'Grace, poise, charm, and—ah—floatability.'" The drawing shows a flapper and her mother—"Couldn't you let your skirt down a little, Mary Louise? It's only an inch below your garters." "For heaven's sake, mother! Do you want me to look like a monk?" These two examples of pictorial humour are reprinted in *The New Yorker Twenty-fifth Anniversary Album*, a handsome collection of one thousand of the magazine's best drawings and cartoons. They first appeared in the late 'twenties during the "New Yorker's" infancy, and they make an excellent backcloth for the later subtleties of Thurber, Helen Hokinson, Rea Irvin, Alan Dunn, Peter Arno, Guy Williams, George Price, Charles Addams, Cobean, Steinberg and others. They're all here—Thurber's "...naïve domestic Burgundy...", George Price's "Watch out, Fred! Here it comes again!" Arno's "Fill'er up!" Cobean's "...out of curiosity, I took a sip—and then another—and another..." and the rest of the gems. A delicious book. A superb Christmas present.

A. B. H.

Books Reviewed Above

- The Moods of London*. R. J. Cruikshank. (Hamish Hamilton, 10/6)
- Londoners*. Maurice Gorham. (Percival Marshall, 12/6)
- The Bookman's London*. Frank Swinnerton. (Wingate, 15/-)
- London Immortals*. Theodora Benson. (Wingate, 15/-)
- Tide of London*. Mervyn Savill. (Britannicus Liber, 45/-)
- The East End of London*. Millicent Rose. (Cresset Press, 31/6)
- The Age of Wren*. Ralph Dutton. (Batsford, 42/-)
- The Shelburne*. Elizabeth Bowen. (Harrap, 15/-)
- Black Sunrise*. Wilfrid Blunt. (Methuen, 21/-)
- The Sea Around Us*. Rachel L. Carson. (Staples Press, 12/6)
- From the Angle of 88*. Eden Phillpotts. (Hutchinson, 10/6)
- The Great Beast*. John Symonds. (Rider, 21/-)
- The New Yorker Twenty-fifth Anniversary Album* (1925-1950). (Hamish Hamilton, 30/-)

Other Recommended Books

- Letters from America*. Alastair Cooke. (Hart-Davis, 12/6) Thirty-two of the admirable broadcasts, chosen from two hundred by the test of listeners' letters. "The book can be taken as a painless introduction to living in the United States"—and also as an extremely pleasurable entertainment.
- The Devil's Elbow*. Gladys Mitchell. (Joseph, 9/6) Mrs. Bradley back in form. Murder on a Scottish coach tour. Straightforward clues, lively narrative and no black magic.

FRIENDS

HOW many friends have we," asked Edith, "for whom we care fourpence?"

"Twopence," I suppose you mean," I said.

"It may have been twopence in the old days," she said, "or even less if we had enough of them, because the price for two hundred is much less than the price for a hundred. Not the actual price, of course, but the price per hundred. The design is quite neat, a cross between a memorial card and an invitation to a literary cocktail party."

I gave up struggling with the leading article in my newspaper and asked her what she was talking about.

"We promised the Post Office when we signed the little form telling them we were moving to a new flat," she said, "that we would let all our correspondents know of the event as soon as possible, to save the sorters wearing themselves to a shadow altering '3, Cranberry Mansions' to '8c Melondale Road' on everything that arrived, so I asked the printing people to estimate for a hundred postcards, and it comes out at fourpence per head if we only have a hundred, and twopence three-farthings per head if we have two hundred."

I hope I value the great gift of friendship as highly as most men, but fourpence a head seemed rather steep, particularly as there would be another three-halfpence each for postage, not to mention the cost of the envelopes.

"Our removal has already cost twice as much as we thought it would," I said, "and friends at fivepence-ha'penny (including postage) or even fourpence-farthing are beyond my means. Instead of sending printed postcards I will systematically work them off in my own handwriting."

I thought the best plan would be to wait until people wrote to us, and then to write back to them answering their letters and at the same time telling them our new address. The first morning there were only two letters, from the

vacuum-cleaner man and Aunt Sybil. By popping a note through the vacuum-cleaner man's letterbox I reckoned I had effected a net saving of fivepence-halfpenny (or fourpence-farthing on the two-hundred price). Even Aunt Sybil, who involved a stamp, cost only twopence-halfpenny.

Next morning eleven letters arrived. Some of them were only circulars, but Edith said it was just as exhausting for the Post Office sorters to re-address circulars as to re-address proper letters, and she made me write to them. Eight letters came on the following day, and I began to dread the arrival of the postman. When six more came by the midday post I surrendered, and telephoned the printers to supply me with two hundred printed postcards.

It was quite a long job addressing them when they arrived, and we had to send them to a lot of casual acquaintances, from whom we had not heard for years, to make up the number. It seemed a pity to waste any of the cards, which were very elegant.

We posted the whole two hundred off together, and Edith said that she was sure we had been wise, as the time I would save not writing

letters was worth more than the few pounds the postcards had cost.

Two days later we could hardly see the doormat for letters when we went downstairs in the morning. There were forty-three in all, and when I opened them I nearly had a fit. All sorts of idiotic people who did not interest us at all wanted to know all about the new flat, and how we found it, and whether we were keeping well, and what we thought of the result of the election. We had not got half-way through answering the pile when the second post arrived with nineteen more questionnaires.

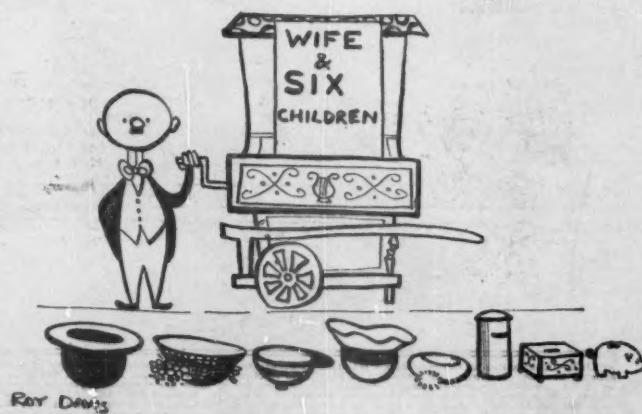
"You'd better ring up the printers," Edith said, when she saw them, "and ask what they would charge for a couple of hundred circular letters saying that we heard of the flat through a friend of a friend of ours, that we are both in splendid health, and the result of the election was exactly what we prophesied all along."

D. H. BARBER

News from Hamelin

"RAT CATCHER
AT NEW TOWN"

FEAR FOR SAFETY
OF CHILDREN."
Daily Telegraph



I TURNED NO MORE MY HEAD

MIDNIGHT was striking as I came out of the station, and the last bus had left at ten past ten. I knew the bus would not have waited; it is not a connection. I walked through the wet, shining streets to the all-night garage and asked for the taxi. It was not available. I walked to the all-night café and asked for *their* taxi. *That* was not available. I walked.

It is four miles from the station to the village where I live. I stepped out through the sleeping streets. On the outskirts two burglars went hurrying past me. They peered at me suspiciously and grasped the life-preservers in their pockets.

Soon I had left the houses behind me and was out in the country. The trees threw eerie shadows when the scudding clouds cleared the face of the thin slice of moon. I started to whistle, and then stopped in case anything heard. Something groaned and creaked in an overhanging branch. I wished my feet did not make such a tremendous noise on the road. Away over the common a wolf heard the noise and set up a howling. The hair bristled icily on my head. Three more wolves answered from various strategic points, and the pack began to gather. I walked

faster. A vampire flew silently over my head, licking its blood-slathered jaws.

There was a rustle in the hedge, and a deep, blowing sigh. A mad bull burst through and followed me. I could hear its breathing and its quick, trotting steps keeping time with my own. Whenever I stopped to listen the bull cunningly stopped too. The vampire flew back again, with a limp, moaning bundle in its talons.

The two burglars had turned and were trailing me, pattering along behind the bull. I wrapped my money in my handkerchief, so that it wouldn't rattle as I ran. One of the burglars was sharpening his razor on a whetstone. The other was urging on a gaunt, silent Great Dane. An escaped convict hiding behind a wall threw a stone at me and laughed hoarsely. The wolves were slinking along the edge of the common. They took no notice of the footpad standing as still as a bush, his cudgel raised. A chill ran down my spine as I heard the distant shriek of a woman being murdered by her husband.

At the cross-roads a suicide rose up and gibbered at me with white extended arms. Down the right-hand road a will-o'-the-wisp danced to meet me, but I crossed over just in time. An old woman in a long

black cloak and a high, sugarloaf hat glided ahead of me, keeping to the cloud-shadows on the road. Every now and then she grinned at me over her shoulder. There was the smell of death and pollution in the air . . .

I burst into the house, slammed the door, and shot home the bolts. Then I flew upstairs to my wife. I wanted to see if she was all right.

"You *do* look hot," she observed, sitting up in bed.

"Had to walk all—all the way," I panted. "Long—long walk."

"There wasn't one."

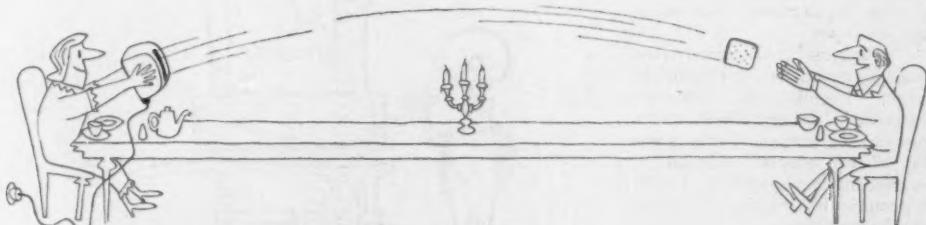
"No," I said.

I didn't tell her about the coach-and-four with the headless coachman. COLIN HOWARD

600

BOND OF THE FREE

WHAT though my English trousers
Are pants across the sea?
What though he may suspend 'em
While bracing is for me?
Shall brother less love brother
Whose fundamental aim—
To keep them up at all costs—
Is happily the same?



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Post and packing 1/3

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11½ x 4½ x 6½ ins. - - - £6.13.3
Post and packing 1/3

Double Inkstand
12½ x 6½ ins. - - - £5.2.6
Post and packing 1/3

Rocker Blotter
5½ x 2½ ins. - - - - - £2.3.0
Post and packing 6d.

Paper Knife
with gilt blade. 9½ ins. long £1.17.6
Post and packing 6d.
Stationery, Ground Floor



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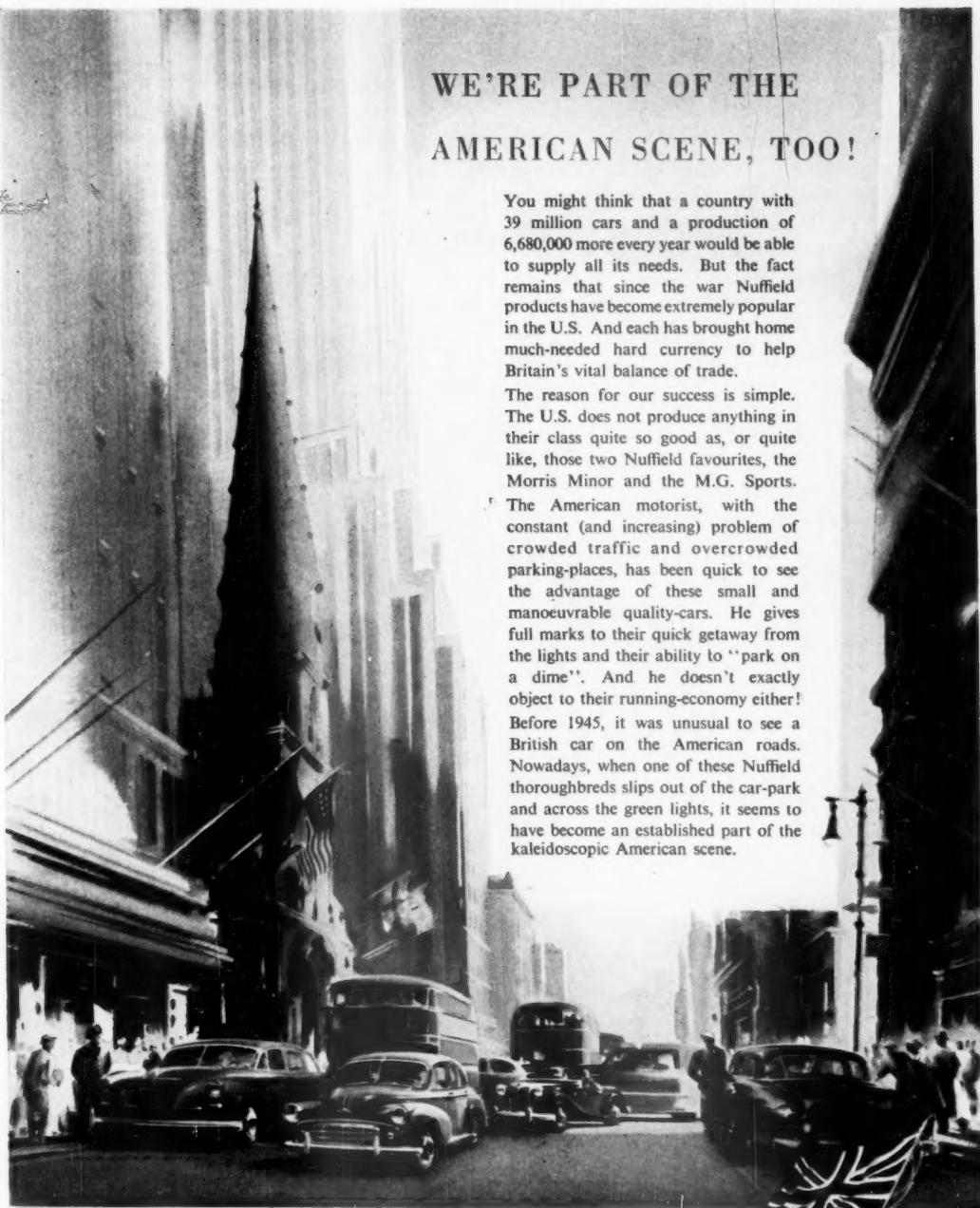
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 when he might also pleasure his palate is twice a fool
 for he doth indifferent service to the one
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Cerebos
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 in every home

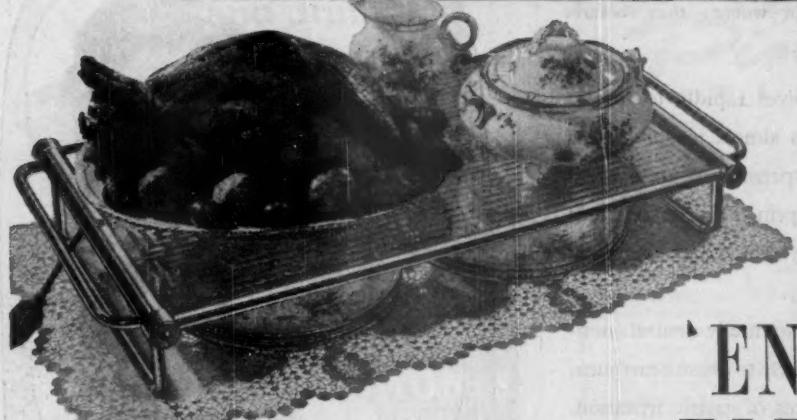


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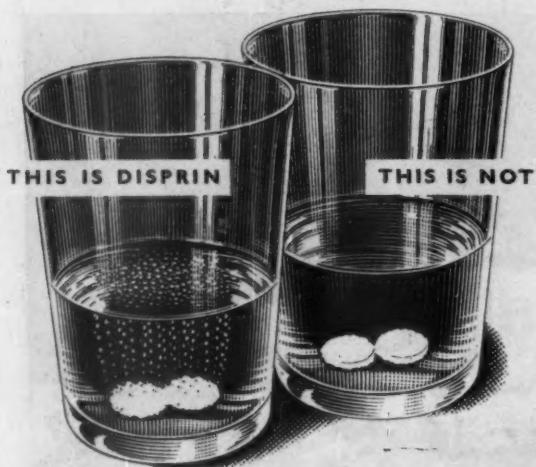


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The ENGLISH ELECTRIC Company Limited, QUEENS HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2

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DISPRIN is recommended



The tablets in these two glasses have the same purpose: to relieve pain. But they are different. They behave differently in water: they behave differently in your stomach.

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From all chemists. 50-tablet bottle 3/4s,
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Who, when and where ?

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TAKE
COLD...



OR DOES HE
TAKE
CROOKES!



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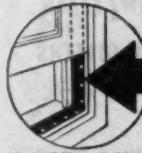
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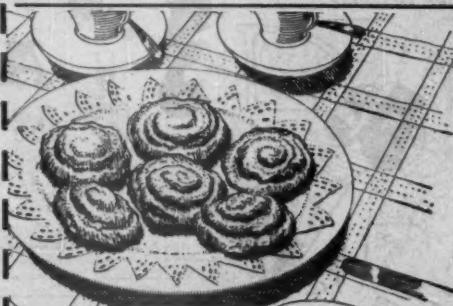
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'PINGER' RECIPES No. 1



Marmalade Pin Wheels

BY Elizabeth Craig

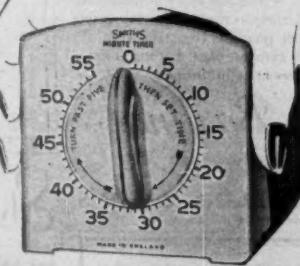
½ lb. flour. 1 oz. margarine.
2 teaspoons Baking Powder. ½ cup milk.
½ teaspoonful salt. Heat oven to 450° F. or Regulo 7.

Sift dry ingredients into a basin. Rub in margarine. Mix to a dough with milk. Turn to a floured board. Knead for a moment or two. Roll lightly into an oblong a ½" thick. Spread with creamed margarine then with orange marmalade to within ½" of edges. Roll up like a swiss roll. Turn join downwards and cut into 14 equal sized slices. Place on a greased baking sheet in oven. Set 'PINGER' to 15 minutes. Remove Pin Wheels when bell rings. Dredge with sugar. Serve hot with butter for tea.

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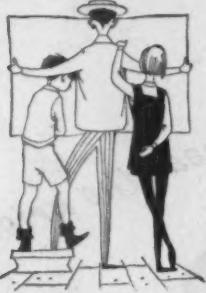
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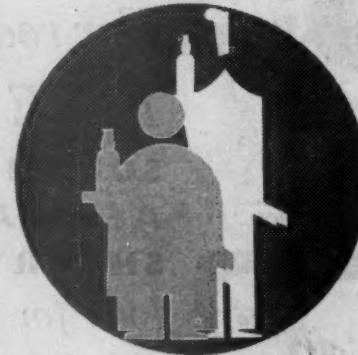
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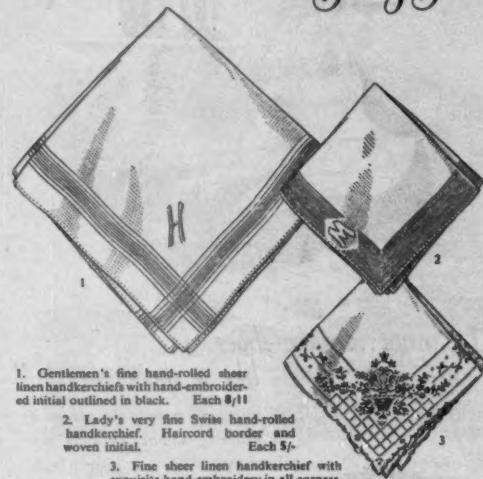
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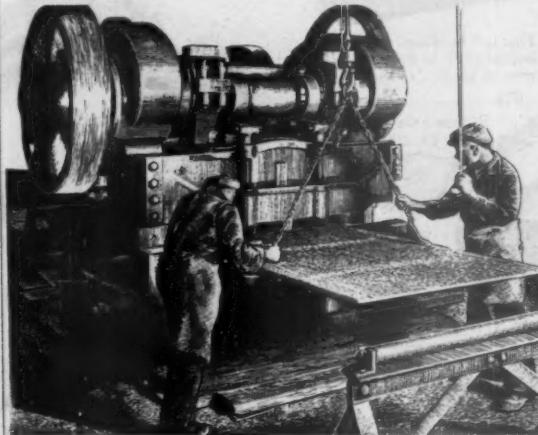


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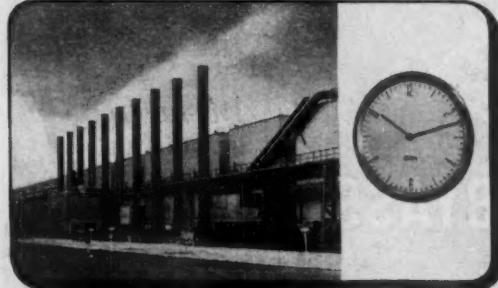
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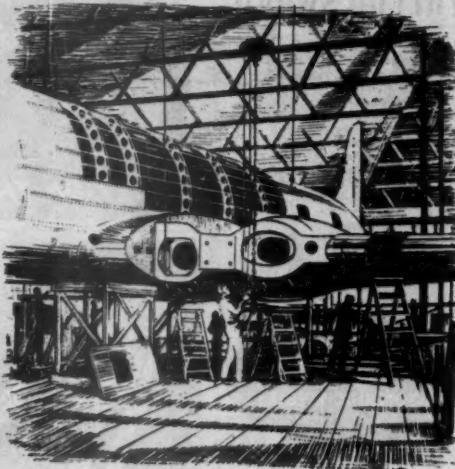
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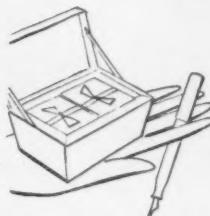
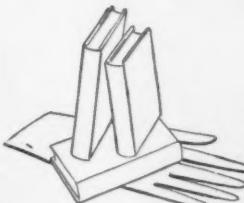


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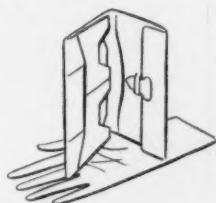
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